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BY NANCY RIMSEN | PAGE 22

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Should the state tax sugared drinks?

» **ART ON TAP** PAGE 28
Drinking and drawing in VT

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FEEDback

READER REACTION TO RECENT ARTICLES

IDLING THREAT

"Getting to Zero" [January 7] is a comprehensive piece on, as the subtitle says, "ways Vermonters can reduce their carbon footprint... at home." There's an additional low-hanging fruit, no-cost way to do this at home. I just wrote-up vehicle idling time in your driveway.

According to the DVM Transportation Research Center, Vermonters' discretionary idling [while parked] wastes 26,500 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually — no small potatoes when much of this is simply unnecessary.

The U.S. Department of Energy says, "The best way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it. No more than 30 seconds of idling on winter days is needed." Driving slowly to moderately is the best way to warm up. A few caveats: Don't drive until defrosting is adequate, don't put an infant or elderly person in a really cold car, and if the temperature is below zero, wait for two to three minutes.

Concern No. 3: No way we'll get in a cold car without warming it up. Weigh the consequences: a few minutes of idling, carbon versus-erasing carbon, wasting energy and money, and polluting the air.

Concern No. 2: We know nothing about or might not want to warm up before leaving. Many cars have "idle stop" buttons. The DOT: Many auto manufacturers' so-called "locking" idling, including warming up. Forth 2015 F-250 Power Stroke diesel manual states, "Idling in cold weather does

not heat the engine to its normal operating temperature. Long periods of idling, especially in cold weather, causes a buildup of deposits which can cause engine damage."

That's said,

Wayne MacIsaac
BURLINGHAM

MacIsaac is director of Title-Free VT.

AIM TRUE

Our central is always going to be a hot topic, and I don't have the answers. I would, however, like to correct a couple of things in [Rae Goss, "Shot in the Dark," January 14].

"Assault weapons" or more appropriately "assault rifles" mean fully automatic. When you pull the trigger, more than one bullet will be fired. I would bet there are fewer than a handful of these guns in Vermont, since none has been manufactured since the mid-1950s, and their low quantity and high price limit them to wealthy collectors who have to lift out a lot of paperwork. Assault rifles are not the focus of most proposed legislation, but rather more common, semi-automatic sporting rifles with particular aesthetic features that deliver one shot with each trigger pull.

Also, "high-capacity ammunition" doesn't exist or make sense. If Sen. Philip Brannen means "magazine capacity limitations," they are irrelevant to him. It is bad gun that much safer to be second if he has two 10-round magazines rather than one 30-round magazine? The answer is no.

TIM NEWCOMB

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1 SUNDAY 25 BOW AND STRING

In Zen Buddhism, an enso—a circle painted with a single brush stroke—signifies a mind and body open to the creative process. **The Enso String Quartet** (pictured) takes this sentiment to heart. Lauded by the *Washington Post* for its “smoldering power,” the award-winning group brings a blend of technicality and creativity to the Northeast Kingdom Classical Series.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32



2 TUESDAY 20 North of the Border

Progressive psychedelic pop—try to say that three times fast. Or head to the Monkey House, where the **Bandana Lovers** will demonstrate it for you. Founded in 2003 by husband-and-wife musicians Jack Laine and Olga Garos, the Portland-based foursome has made a name for itself with a lot of surprising and often raucous sound.

SEE INTERVIEW ON PAGE 32

3 THURSDAY 22 Fast Forward

Just what it looks like when you might end? According to **Kathryn Greiner**, creator of *Meragyle*, towns and places far in the future of a binary universe worth pursuing. Joined by contributor James Cameron, she discusses the sci-fi future of the technology—and the golden age of science fiction that works to a not-so-far future.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 34

4 THURSDAY 23-SATURDAY 24 Off the Cuff

It's not all fun and games when performers from the Vermont Actors Repertory Theatre go head to head in **Off the Cuff**. Two teams of dramatic improvisers take on a variety of challenges, drawing prompts into spontaneous scenes for a panel of judges. Comedic, dramatic and everything in between. Don't miss this fun game show to please.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

5 FRIDAY 23 & SATURDAY 24 Big Ideas

The **U.S. of America Company of Middlebury** hosts a performance series that the Union of colleges, artists, writers, composers and big thinkers. Led by artists director Thomas Pickett, Middlebury College students explore identity and social representation in the age of the iPhone and iPad in the presence of the evening's highlights.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

6 WEDNESDAY 28 Information Age

From the time he could walk a mouse, programming prodigy **Aaron Swartz** dedicated his life to computers. Having his technological work as a teenager in his hand court with colleagues three times his age. At the web giant's popularity, so did Swartz's engagement about its threat to civil liberties. A topic explored in the 2014 documentary *Aaron Swartz: A Great Day*.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

7 ONGOING A Stitch in Time

The **Heirloom** embroidery collection *"The Great One"* is now online or in person at the agency's gallery. On view in the East Hill at Springfield, this classic collection of heirloom and modern embroidery features a modern twist. From quilting to new fashion to hand-dyed wool, handmade works of art from artists to artists.

SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 30

responded, "on the web of contradictions within his program across disciplines."

Most of his agenda appears to be a grab bag of enthusiastically disparate proposals providing state data to schools, banning street and board-imposed contracts, and committing to a moratorium on landfills from Montpelier. The big kahuna — his threat to shutter schools — came without any detail at all.

The *Shovel* summed up his "partnership" proposal neatly: "State experts are coming with data. If they don't like what they find, they might close your school."

4. Public sector unions are pissed

If you're trying to close a \$44 million budget gap — make that \$112 million, after this week's revenue downgrade — you're probably gonna cut some state workers. Shumlin's budget trims 72 positions in state government — and adds another 61.

Most of the cuts come from the Community High School of Vermont, where seven staffers in state prisons, the Vermont Welfare Home and public safety cell centers.

The gov proposed another \$9 million in personnel cost reductions, \$5 million of which would be negotiated with the Vermont State Employees Association.

Needless to say, that doesn't sit well with VSEA executive director **JOHN BURNHAM**, who says state workers are "informed" that they're being "treated like they're second-class citizens."

"That's nothing compared to what the Vermont National Education Association thinks of Shumlin's education proposal."

"He made it clear that there are children who live in towns who no longer deserve to go to school in their communities," says Vermont-NEA spokesman **CARRISON HALL**. "He made it clear that many small schools had to close, and potentially hundreds of middle-class taxpayers will lose their jobs."

First he lost the single prayer groups. Now he's lost the unions.

5. On water quality, Shumlin opened up a can of lampreys.

Statehouse insiders were puzzled two weeks ago when Shumlin devoted his entire inaugural address — part one of his "Agenda for Progress" — to river water quality and water quality, the latter of which he's rarely discussed publicly.

Perhaps he was trying to get out ahead of last week's announcement that the U.S. Department of Agriculture was sending \$16 million aid way for Lake Champlain cleanup. Or perhaps he was acknowledging the reality that if Vermont doesn't act to clean up some algae blooms, the Riverine and Protection Agency will — and it won't be pretty.

"The goals are not visionary," VTigger's **ANNE GILBERT** wrote in the news. "They are neither state's most-desire"

Whether the narration, Shumlin has now committed himself to a politically sensitive — and extraordinarily expensive — promise. And if he thinks stomach uncontrollably even are going to let him slip away from it, he's wrong.

At a Statehouse press conference last Wednesday, Vermont Natural Resources Council executive director **BRUCE SHAPIRO** urged him best to keep fellow citizens notified around a positive message pointing Shumlin for his newfound love of the lake. But **PAUL SHUMLIN**, the Conservation Law Foundation's aggressive state director, quickly went off-script, saying the gov's plan was "bold" but "not quite bold enough."

Lake Champlain International's even more aggressive executive director, **JOHN WILSON**, didn't even share that in an email to supporters, he slammed the administration, saying it has "no plan" to clean up the lake's most polluted bays.

"Do not get upset when dudes quack or chicken cluck! Of course not — it's even worse," Kilmer wrote. "Why get upset then when politicians pout?" That is what they do.

6. Shumlin went with the Goldfishes approach

Shumlin appears to have allocated everybody equally with his budget address which isn't that bad of an outcome.

Sen. **JOE HENNING** (R-Colchester) says he wishes the governor took "a harder look at what we're doing to see what we can justify."

And **PAUL BRAY**, who runs the left-leaning Public Affairs Institute, says he wishes the budget would move from high-earning Vermonters benefiting from the recovery and less from those struggling to make ends meet.

"Here's a budget that is slandering assistance to the modest Vermonters," Gilson says, referring to cuts to the Reach Up welfare program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and general assistance. "It just seems backwards to me."

But speaking primarily after the speech, some on the left admitted they worried the budget might get deeper — and some on the right said they thought the news might be tougher.

7. The really interesting stuff went unsaid

Will the legislature legislate marijuana? Will it vote against-renewed homogen? Will it even debate a carbon tax? Will it mandate paid sick leave? Will it require universal background checks for gun buyers?

Shumlin didn't brooch a word about any of those subjects. Nor should he bother to let other congressional politics play out on the legislature before engaging too much.

Dude's got enough on his plate already. ☺

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A Distant War Haunts Accused Vermont Refugee

BY MARK DIAMOND

After a two-year investigation, an unusual trial began in federal court last week based on allegations that Soviet refugee convicted criminals returned during the Russian War. But for all the hours of testimony and hundreds of pages of evidence, one question has barely been addressed: Who is Slobodan Sakoe?

Prosecutors say that Sakoe raped two women and assisted in the murders of two others during the ethnic bloodbath in Bosnia in 1992, and led about 10 fugitive U.S. citizenship, in U.S. District

Court in Burlington, witnesses for the prosecution have described a man who stood idly by while his comrades

shot two women and then helped drag their corpses outside to be buried.

Other evidence suggests that Sakoe, 55, is an unremarkable man who led a modest life in Bosnia and settled into domesticity in Vermont. Court documents describe Sakoe — pronounced “Sob-Coch” — as a former janitor and stay-at-home dad who likes fishing, gardening and cooking meals for friends.

“While the terms ‘war crimes’ and ‘war criminal’ conjure up images of old men limping out their lives comfortably in South American countries, this image does not apply to Mr. Sakoe,” Sakoe’s attorneys said in a court filing. “It is an image born of the Nazi war criminals who fled Europe at the end, and after World War II, both men had money and forged documents provided by third parties... he moved here under his real name and has been living in plain sight.”

The U.S. Department of Justice in recent years has prosecuted a few Russian and Serbian refugees for crimes committed abroad, but such cases are almost unheard of in Vermont. Burlington native prosecutor Leslie Haladine said she is unaware of local authorities prosecuting any refugees for crimes related to actions that occurred in their native countries.

“It’s not done a dozen — I certainly have not seen it in Vermont,” said Haladine, who is president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Among Vermont’s U.S. Attorney Kefauver Crowley acknowledged his office rarely prosecutes immigration fraud cases, but declined further comment. The trial was still under way as press time.

Sakoe, a Burlington resident, spent 16 years in prison and deportation, if corrected on two charges that he falsified his citizenship application by not disclosing his participation in the alleged acts of violence. He does not have a criminal record and is not facing any charges from Russian or international courts. He has returned to Bosnia — where he still owns a home — half a dozen times since moving to the U.S.



Slobodan Sakoe

New defense attorneys say Sakoe has no money, and a judge last year ordered him to be released from prison, apparently convinced that he wouldn't flee before trial. It likely helped that a number of people from the Vermont refugee community wrote letters of support for Sakoe. Many noted that he has friends from serving other countries' backgrounds.

Investigators have not explained during the trial or in court documents how they learned of Sakoe's alleged crimes or what triggered the prosecution. But they traveled to Bosnia last year to videotape witnesses whose testimonies were prepared — and translated — last week in court. A spokesman and the U.S. Justice Department does not track the cost of trials.

As prosecutors laid out their case, Sakoe sometimes seemed to be a capricious character in his own right. Most of the testimony focused not on the accused, but on fellow

villagers "Slobodan" his companion during the night in question. Authorities don't know Sakoe's last name, and they say he's on the lam.

Two videotaped witnesses said that Sakoe in that and killed two Serbian women inside a house where they were hiding while Sakoe, wearing a mask, stood by while he helped drag the corpses outside, then stood far away while Sakoe dumped them with gas, lit them on fire and danced in celebration.

Almost every eyewitness said he or she didn't know Sakoe — even the women he allegedly raped. They identified him as the “worst man” and learned his name only later from others in the village.

Similarly, immigration officers who handled his paperwork testified that they did not remember the client, building Sakoe.

In court, Sakoe wore dark socks, shiny black shoes, thick-framed glasses and loose-fitting dress shirts. He rarely interacted with his lawyers, and spent most of the trial watching video testimony as he listened to an interpreter through headphones. His face betrayed no emotion during the trial. During court breaks, Sakoe occasionally chatted with the two female interpreters who sat next to him.

Sakoe has a wife of 22 years, Rita, and a young daughter who was born in Vermont, but neither attended the trial. He also has an adult son and a grandchild in Bosnia. He did not appear to have any supporters in the courtroom gallery.

Aurum were offered only random pieces of the puzzle that a Sakoe left. He lived in Potitri, a hamlet, near a village of 900 people from Bosnia's three main ethnic groups: Croats, Serbs and Muslims, Serbs in Muslims.

In the 1970s, he spent a mandatory year in the Yugoslavian Army as a cook. In the 1980s, Sakoe worked in a nearby city maintaining rail cars for the railroad company. The narrative offered at the trial then dropped about 1992, when Yugoslavians began to fight and ethnic war broke out.

Kritac, Serbia, with the support of leaders from the neighboring province of Serbia, went on the offensive in Bosnia, occupying Muslims and Croats. The Serbian military swept south and took control of Potitri, causing many to flee the village. But Muslims and Croats banded together and pushed out the Serbs by July 1992.

Prosecutors say that Sakoe took part in reprisals against ethnic Serbs. One witness described him as a “recommunist officer.” According to eyewitness testimony recorded in Bosnia, in July 1992 Sakoe and Babun stayed in a home in Potitri belonging to Miro and Nada Bjuravich, looking for three Serb women the couple was sheltering.

Witnesses said the two men took one of the women from the house and put her in their car, then drove down away. The women testified that the driver, who wore a mask, raped her inside another home before dropping her off at a prison camp. Others identified Slobok as the driver. The men then returned to the house, and Slobok killed the two other women, prosecutors say.

In March 2006, Slobok turned up in neighboring Croatia, where he visited a U.S. immigration officer and requested asylum in America. He claimed that in August 1993, he was arrested, imprisoned and tortured by Croat military forces because he was a Muslim. He escaped their custody, but said he feared living anywhere in Bosnia where Croats remained.

Slobok's application was approved in May 2007. He settled in Vermont with his wife and son. His son later returned to Bosnia.

Court documents filed by attorneys provided a few more details. Apparently Slobok has lived in Berre and Essex Junction, but settled in Burlington several years ago.

At one point, he and his wife both worked for a custodial services company. But in recent years, he's cared for his young daughter in the home they rent in Burlington. "Edin became a happy father and he chose to be her primary care provider while I returned to work," Edin Slobok wrote in a letter to the court. "I worked very hard at several jobs at the same time to support my family. Edin is a good father."

Though he has been in the United States since 2003, Slobok is apparently unable to understand or read much English. He needed translators to fill out medical forms and citizenship paperwork.

That didn't stop him from getting along in Vermont. Last year, when Judge William Scamman III was weighing whether to release Slobok from prison to live in the community, he only 30 friends wrote to the court to support a man they described as unloved by ethnic Bosnian. Slobok is godfather to the son of an Orthodox Serbian friend. He used to be a Serbian Croat living in Vermont to be the godmother to his own daughter. Though they are Muslims, the Sloboks have attended the Good Shepherd

Lutheran Church in Jericho on a few occasions.

"Mr. Slobok is not a prejudiced person," his friends (Savitski) and Davorica Gostic wrote the court. "He has friends like ourselves who are mixed Muslim and Croatian Christian. Others of his friends are Serbian Orthodox. Having been with him during many family and friends gatherings with people from many cultural and religious backgrounds, I have not seen him as being biased towards people of ethnic or religious backgrounds different from his own."

Slobok like to go fishing on the Wisconsin River — often with an Arab buddy — and to share his catches with friends. While living in Berre, he became close to Congresswoman Jackie Abramowitz and her family. "As refugees here in the U.S., we became to connect on each other in our daily lives," she once wrote to the court. "Mr. Slobok may or may not have done all those things, but for me, he is a good person, a caring father, husband and a compassionate friend. They welcome us with open arms, he seemed very friendly and entertaining. He would always cook for us a very big traditional meal at his house and would invite us in his place to spend some quality time with the family."

Before the trial, Slobok was released to live with a friend in Essex Junction. Thomas Tuller, a retired physics teacher, told a judge that Slobok often helped his wife take care of their garden and sheep. Tuller said he looked forward to having Slobok around more.

By Tuesday afternoon, prosecutors had finished presenting their case, and Slobok's defense team started calling their own witnesses, including a cultural anthropologist who tried to explain to jurors the ethnic tensions that once consumed Slobok half a world away.

Slobok listened intently, and when the day was done, he took an elevator to the first floor and walked outside, into the frigid evening air. By the end of the week, jurors may have decided whether he will remain free. ☐

For ongoing trial coverage, check out the Seven Days *Off Message* blog. Contact news@lightinghouse.com, 868-8509, ext. 25, or @SevenD7.



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Legal Pot in Vermont?

Not Yet, Say Some Top Policy Makers

BY TERRI HALLENBECK

Mason Trott had never been to Vermont before last week, but he's known for a while that the Green Mountain State would be next on his itinerary. The man credited with making Colorado the first state to legalize marijuana hopes to make Vermont the first to do so legislatively — not by public referendum.

Standing onstage last Thursday night at Club Metromaine in downtown Burlington, the former Trott took the mic like an adept preacher, telling Vermonters to the cause. "It's illegal because people think it's dangerous. We really need to be changing the way people think about that," Trott said.

Trott fired up his audience of some 500 seated spirits with the marijuana-is-better-than-alcohol argument that won him Colorado. As many in the audience as per legal pitch effort, he asked them to help spread the message to their neighbors — and their representatives in state capital.

"What we really need, and what's going to be the biggest victory, is to get it passed by a legislature. That's when you know you're gotten over the hump," Trott said. "I really do think Vermont is the place where we're going to see this happen really soon."

In the next few weeks Sen. David Zuckerman (D/D-Charlotte) plans to unveil a bill that would legalize marijuana for recreational use and allow for its legal cultivation and sale. Rep. Chris Ferraro (D-Burlington) aims to introduce the same bill in the House.

Fighting alongside them will be the Marijuana Policy Project, for whom Trott is spokesman, and an eclectic group of organizations and prominent citizens who make up the Vermont Coalition to Regulate Marijuana. Among them: former governor Madeleine Kunin, environmentalist Bill McKibben, the American Civil Liberties Union, and both the Progressive and Libertarian parties.

At Club Metromaine last Thursday, James Boyd of Burlington said the new marijuana is a natural medicine that can prevent people from using far more dangerous pharmaceutical drugs. "I would love to spread the word," he said.

But is Vermont ready to become the next state — and the first on the East Coast — to legalize pot? At least one high profile supporter, Gov. Peter Shumlin, said he'd like to see it happen — but not yet.

He said the first state to ban slavery, legalize gay marriage through legislative action and mandate labeling of genetically modified foods might be wise to take it easy.

"I think this is the next logical step going forward, but I don't think Vermont should do this until we understand our needs and what doesn't. For one, there are still unanswered questions," Shumlin said at a Mount Luther King Jr. Day event on Monday. "I don't know exactly what the right time frame is. I'm not going to speculate on a date."

Data — and a Lack Thereof

Last Friday, the nonprofit RAND Corporation released a 318-page report detailing what legislators might mean for Vermont. Commissioned by the legislature and governor last May, the report drew on its conclusions but



provided plenty of fodder.

It explores a wide range of aspects: how legalization works in Colorado and Washington; how many Vermonters use marijuana (60,000 to 100,000); how much money the state could make if it were legalized and taxed (\$10 million to \$20 million a year); and how it could be sold.

Legislators, supporters

hope the report will be a launching pad for debate. "I think those numbers bear their cause," Zuckerman said of past opponents. He said that the number of people using black-market marijuana in Vermont — roughly 10 to 20 percent of residents — makes clear that prohibition isn't working.

RAND's research also reveals the deep complexities of legislating bodily a solution: the federal government and surrounding states would still consider illegal. "I'm hoping most people are thinking this is a very complex issue," said Debby Haskins, executive director of Smart Approaches to Marijuana Vermont, a chapter of the anti-legalization group started by former congressman Patrick Kennedy.

Many of the report's estimates are expressed in wide ranges because it's hard to know how many people use an illegal substance — or how many would if it were legal. RAND based its estimates on federal surveys.

Vermonters spend an estimated \$125 million to \$225 million a year on marijuana, the study found. "Because it's a black market, it's very hard to have a precise figure here," Erika Kilmer, project leader for RAND, warned last week to be prepared for a range of the report's findings.

Drawing from Colorado's year of experience in initial sales and six months in Washington, much of the data is still evolving, according to Kilmer. "It's going to be a while before you have the kind of high-quality reports you need," he said.

Various reports suggest that Colorado's legalization is going relatively well despite some hiccups. Democratic Gov. John Hickenlooper, who initially opposed legalization, appears to be changing his tune. This month on "60 Minutes," he said, "I probably would've reversed it. Now, I'm not so sure I'd do that."

But it's not all smooth sailing in Colorado. Marijuana edibles have caused some problems — some customers apparently didn't realize that a full cookie contains more than a single dose. And in December, Colorado was sued by Nebraska and Oklahoma, which attorneys general claim that marijuana is crossing state lines in hand. On the same side, tax revenues from marijuana sales have been somewhat unpredictable — so far. In August, the Denver Post reported that Colorado's marijuana revenues were coming more than 60 percent below predictions. Tax and estimates that the state would use \$60

million in the first half of the year turned into just over \$12 million, according to the Post.

When Alaska voters went to the polls in November to legalize marijuana there, state officials declined to offer an estimate on its revenues, the Alaska Dispatch News reported.

Vermont has 12 percent the population of Colorado, but RAND projected the state could bring in up to \$75 million a year from taxing marijuana. That's based on a variety of factors, including the number of current users, whether Vermont allows sales to out-of-state, the size of the potential market, given

Vermont's proximity to New York, Boston and Montreal and how many marijuana stores the state permits. Much also depends on whether Vermont can eliminate the black market and whether neighboring states legalize it, too.

Vermont lawmakers are already questioning the revenue projections. "I find it hard to believe tax revenues would match what RAND says," said Senate President Pro Tempore John Campbell (D-Windsor), a former police officer who is wary of legalization.

The report notes that Vermont could consider various limitations on legalization. For example, Colorado allows home cultivation while Washington does not. Colorado allows an unlimited number of retail stores — in July there were 700. Washington caps it at 854, which is also the total number of liquor stores the state operated before it privatized them in 2013.

"If I were in your chair, I'd worry seriously be thinking about my business," Jonathan Calkins, a RAND analyst, told the House Ways and Means Committee last week.

Stateowners and he doubt the bill's vote would allow for a store on every corner. "I don't think that'll be what will pass," he told the gathering at Club Metromaine last week.

The Push and the Pushback

Zuckerman, a 55-year-old, portlanded organic farmer, has been championing marijuana in Vermont since he was elected to the legislature in early two decades ago. He told the Club Metromaine gathering that he occasionally used the drug as a University of Vermont student, and his standing as a successful business owner and politician shows it had no deleterious effect.

"It's just never made sense to me," he said of marijuana being illegal. "Right now, regulated alcohol is harder to get for high school teenagers than unregulated marijuana." Zuckerman and others have succeeded in softening Vermont's marijuana laws in recent years, legalizing medical marijuana in 2004, permitting medical marijuana dispensaries in 2011 and decriminalizing possession of an ounce or less in 2013.

Each time, there was opposition from those who feared looser laws would increase drug use among children, increase drug addiction and psychiatric crises. Matt Simon, New England political director for the Marijuana Policy Project, is a veteran of these earlier battles. This year, he's back in Vermont doing grassroots organizing with support from the Neveon Group, a Montpelier lobbying firm.

Efforts to legalize pot will again meet opposition, and this time it will be stronger than in the past, predicted Vermont Police Chief George Merkel, president of the Vermont Police Chiefs Association. Merkel opposed marijuana dispensaries and decriminalization, and while he ultimately lost those fights, he saw law enforcement officials concerned that dispensaries and decriminalization have led to detrimental consequences. He described decriminalization as "workable," but added, "I wouldn't say it works well." Legalization poses bigger challenges for public safety and drug addiction, he argued. "At a time when the state is in a drought because of drug abuse, it seems ludicrous to legalize another substance," he said. He also noted that there are no roadside tests for drugged-driving.

**I THINK THIS IS THE NEXT
LOGICAL STEP GOING FORWARD,
BUT I DON'T THINK VERMONT
SHOULD DO THIS UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND
WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T.**

GOV. PETER SHUMLIN

Burlington Boys & Girls Club executive director Mary Alice MacKinnon pushed Merkel to firm the Vermont chapter of SAM in 2003. MacKinnon told the voters about marijuana's impact on children. "The thought of allowing a market to be created around the product is frightening, unless I could be convinced there could be a regulatory system that could prevent this product from reaching children," MacKinnon said.

MacKinnon, retired from a career in substance abuse counseling, became SAM-Vermont's volunteer executive director in October. The group is affiliated with the national organization, the said, but receives no national money.

SAM-Vermont has also hired a Montpelier lobbying firm — Ellis Mills — in hopes of preventing legislation. As MacKinnon explained, "You have to have a knowledgeable presence to the legislature."

Not Now?

Many of the most powerful policy makers in Vermont are stinging Shumlin's tone on marijuana legalization. Not yet 71, he said we should go slow, get all the facts, said Chittenden County State's Attorney J.T. Donovan, who attended last Friday's RAND presentation. "I definitely have concerns," Chief among them, Donovan said, are the impact on children and on driving under the influence. Shumlin's own health care secretary Dr. Harry Clark, concurs. He's concerned that regular use of marijuana by youth lowers IQ and that there's insufficient data from older users to settle those concerns. Asked how he would advise Shumlin on the issue, Chen said, "Not now."

Plenty of obstacles remain, before a bill could even reach Shumlin's desk.

"I don't expect it to come up this session," said Sen. Dick Sears (D-Bennington), chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "I don't think we need to be the first in the Northeast."

As Zuckerman discussed his bill with a reporter last week at the Metromaine, House Speaker Ralp Smith (D-Morrisville) walked by, asked for his take on the legislation. Smith reiterated, "I'm not a big fan."

But are past prognostics flailing? It doesn't appear so. In a recent *VICE* magazine story titled "Can Vermont Bring Legal Weed to the Northeast?" Simon from the Marijuana Policy Project discussed Vermont's potential role in the national movement. "If Vermont legislators seize this opportunity to pass a marijuana regulation bill in 2014, that would set a strong example for legislators in other states," he told *VICE*.

Advocates might be expecting Shumlin to come through. The governor appeared at a New York City fundraiser for the Marijuana Policy Project in September 2013 and spoke on a fundraising conference call for the group the following September. This photo appears prominently on NPP's political action committee home page. That PPA helped Shumlin win his last gubernatorial election with an \$18,000 contribution in 2010, and gave him \$2,000 in 2012 and \$2,000 last year.

NORML, another pro-legalization group, contributed \$14,000 to Shumlin over three elections, including \$1,000 in 2012, after he offered to become the movement's national spokesman. "My bias is toward legalization," Shumlin said on Monday, but he cautiously agreed not making a bet on the issue. "There's a strong support of sensible marijuana policy."

Vermont has actually lagged behind other states in relaxing marijuana policies. The marijuana dispensary law Shumlin signed in 2010 is one of the most restrictive in the nation. When Vermont decriminalized in 2013, it was the 19th state to do so. At the same time, studies indicate that marijuana is more widely used here than in other states — and is more culturally accepted. A Catothink Polling Institute poll last year showed 57 percent of Vermonters in support of legalization.

None of these are also anticipating business opportunities. Since 2011, law entities have registered new corporations in Vermont with the word "marijuana" in the company name.

Rob Barkley of Westminster West registered the name Southern Vermont Cannabis in November. He said he's part of a small collective of people who believe marijuana should be legal. As for the group's plans, he said, "It's kind of a little bit of a stretch subject. Right now, we're defining that."

Club Metromaine co-owners Christopher Walsh and James Geland, who hosted last week's gathering and are longtime supporters of legislation and they would be interested in naming a marijuana club, which they figure would be separate from the current bar.

An Unlabeled pointed out, "We're already selling one legal, regulated drug." ☐

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POLITICS

Burlington Residents to Decide on Noncitizen Voting

BY ALICIA FREEST

In 2007, an Italian ecologist led a group of local immigrants in trying to convince Burlington residents to allow people who weren't U.S. citizens to vote in Town Meeting Day. The proposal elicited reactions so volatile that the group disbanded.

Four years later, Progressive Councilor Vince Iannuso asked the city council to put that question to voters. It did during deliberations.

By the time Iannuso brought the proposal up again in 2014, things had changed: All but two councilors agreed to put the question on Burlington's ballot this March. The once-unlikely Mayor Miro Weinberger supported the decision, too.

How did a nonstarter issue turn into a political possibility? A 24-year-old librarian in *Refuge*, a few pundits in *Prosp*, a consultant's report and an assumed Canadian citizen all played a role.

Burlington is home to roughly 1,000 "newcomers" — 4.5 percent of the city's population, according to the U.S. Census. The term refers to legal residents — people with Green Cards or shorter-term visas — who haven't been naturalized. Obtaining citizenship can take more than a decade for some foreign-born residents; others are reluctant to renounce citizenship in their country of origin.

Maria Grossi, a 34-year-old Italian clinician with a PhD in forest ecology, moved to Burlington in 2002 to work at the University of Vermont's Grand Institute for Ecological Economics. Grossi calculated that it would take her nine years to become eligible for a Green Card, and another five to obtain citizenship.

During that time, Grossi was frustrated at being excluded from what she calls the "destructive participatory democracy that Vermont is famous for." In 2006, she started the Vermont Immigrant Voting Alliance — a small group of mostly first-collapsers, including an Australian history professor and a German biophysicist. *Former Progressive city councilor and state legislator Terry Iannuso* gave them political advice.

VIVA! didn't receive much attention until members staged a mock election on Town Meeting Day in 2007. With the city's permission, they cut five ballots in a fake booth at an actual polling location. It generated stories on Vermont Public Radio and in the *Burlington Free Press*.

Then came the backlash, according to Grossi. The news coverage generated harsh online comments, like "Only



AMERICANS should vote in AMERICAN elections... If they don't like how we spend tax money, then get the hell out." Taken shock by what felt like personal attacks, the group gave up. Grossi, who moved to Newbury in 2010 and is in the process of applying for citizenship, still keeps copies of the press coverage and the online comments.

In 2011, two Progressive city councilors — Brennan and current party chair Irene Mulvaney-Stank — picked up where Grossi left off. But the lack of council support was so apparent that they didn't bother requesting a vote. "There wasn't much interest," Mulvaney-Stank recalled. "Bob Klein was a home-body impact," she said, and attention had turned to the mayoral race between Weinberger and Republican Councilor Kurt Wright. On the subject of noncitizen voting, neither candidate had much to say, except that they weren't sure how they felt about it.

Mulvaney-Stank stepped down in 2012, but her Progressive successor, Rachel Siegel, became a convert to the cause, even before getting elected. "I became acutely aware of the issue when I was campaigning three years ago and going door to door," Siegel said. "When I would get to a door and the person who answered it was from another country, I would have this knee-jerk reaction of, 'I shouldn't waste my time here,' and then I would immediately have a reaction... of horror."

City officials experienced similar discomfort. Joe Meschi, when Acting Khadija applied for a position in the Parks & Recreation Commission, Khadija, who spent 17 years in a Nepalese refugee camp after fleeing Bosnia, wanted to encourage the department to reach out to New Americans.

Sitting in his office at Spectrum Youth & Family Services, wearing a black polo and bright green pants, Khadija recalled one time cops busted a parking soccer game on a field at the private Mount Christ School. The group of young Old North End players had no idea they were trespassing according to Khadija, who was confused by the incident as he described the incident. No other field was close enough to meet their needs.

City officials told Khadija he didn't qualify for the commission because he wasn't a citizen, but he applied anyway. "I wanted to make sure my voice had been heard," he said.

It was. When the council started discussing the issue, it discovered that the city endorsement allowed noncitizens to serve on

certain boards — such as the Development Review Board and the Housing Review Board — but were barred from serving others. "It absolutely is clear that it makes no sense," said Councilor Wright recently.

Weinberger came to the same conclusion when interviewing candidates to head his departments — he wouldn't reveal details, but in one case the mayor said that the most qualified applicant was a Canadian whom he couldn't hire.

The council led councilors to unanimously approve a separate question for the March ballot that will ask voters if Burlington should allow noncitizens to work on department boards and serve on all city boards and commissions. Unlike

noncitizen voting, the charter change would not require an amendment to the state constitution.

Pleaching documents are often dismissed as filing-cabinet fodder, but Siegel, Brennan and Weinberger agree that Burlington's Diversity & Equity Strategic Plan influenced the debate, too. Drafted by independent consultants last spring, the

IT FEELS LIKE A CONTRADICTORY POSITION TO SAY ... PEOPLE CAN VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME IN THE COMMUNITY BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO LET PEOPLE VOTE.

MADEIRA WINDGIRL

report recommended what the Pros had been pushing for: that the city allow its constituents to serve on commissions and boards, and permit them to participate in local elections.

On the latter, the mayor and some councilors were more confident: "I want you to think about it," Weinberger recalled Wednesday. "It definitely seemed like an interesting question, and I certainly saw points on both sides."

Segal sealed the political opening to argue that allowing noncitizens to serve on boards without lifting their vote for the officials who appointed them would amount to "treason." He remembers ending that point to the mayor in a 20-minute phone conversation before the vote. "That was the turning point," he went from skeptic to yes.

The far-left councilor had belatedly with Weinberger repeatedly over diversity and equity issues. "That phone conversation was one of the highlights of my experience on city council," Segal said.

When explaining the evolution of his stance, Weinberger didn't specifically mention the phone call, but he did cite Segal's logic. "As I think Councilor Segal has stated quite knowledgeably, it feels like a contradictory position to say... people are volunteers that are in the community but we are not going to let people vote."

On January 11, in his first campaign speech of the season, Weinberger laid out his goals to the crowd of Democrats who had just voted to reelect him for a second term. One was to make Burlington "a city of inclusion and opportunities for all." He didn't mention voting, but he did cite the effort to open up city leadership positions to noncitizens.

The mayor's position isn't the only one that has evolved. In the past, Burlington town hall has spoken predominantly about preserving voting as a right exclusively to citizens. Citing his parents — naturalized French Canadians — he's argued that "voting becomes an incentive for people to become citizens, and I think that to the extent that we can incentivize that, we should." But Kloss said he's come to realize that's not necessarily true for Queen City immigrants. He confesses that he's aware how he fits into March.

Andrew Thibault, a quilter who has worked as a city planner for the last seven years, argues the opposite effort: Voting in local elections could make immigrants more inclined to seek citizenship because they'll want to participate at the state and federal levels. Here in a work week, Thibault helped create Burlington's climate action plan and planBTV.

Melicia Clarke is a registered nurse and single mother who describes herself as a "radically involved parent." In her spare time, she serves as president of the parent-teacher organization at Lawrence

Barre and sits on the governor-appointed Building Bright Futures council.

After Burlington voters rejected the school budget last year, she distributed fliers encouraging people to support the schools. Her 9-year-old son has Down syndrome, so she was especially concerned about preserving public-inclusive positions.

But Clarke wasn't able to cast a ballot in the second vote she moved to the U.S. from Jamaica as a teen and had never felt compelled to apply for citizenship. When the budget passed by a thin margin of under 70 votes, "That was the first time when I wished I could do something," Clarke said.

Despite increasing support for noncitizens voting, this seemed a warning to the council on the night they approved both ballot issues. "Now shouldn't be deluded by what you hear this evening. There are plenty of people out in the community who have strong reservations about this matter," Michael Ly, a Republican campaigning for a council seat in the New North End, is one of them. The American-born son of Cambodian refugees advocates against the measure, pointing out that no other state allows it.

Tekelle Caldwellson, a Progressive community activist, started searching the issue roughly a year ago. He notes that Vermont's original constitutions of 1777 and 1793 allowed noncitizens to vote, and that places like Thomas Park, Md., and Andover, Mass., currently allow it.

Supporters of the measure are trying to bring in many Burlington residents on board as possible. "The under the margin is, the more likely the state is to consider it," Segal said. They've formed a fundraising group called I Vote Vermont, and they're hosting two public discussions during the next several weeks.

Caldwellson and Brennan have given presentations about noncitizens voting at every neighborhood planning assembly and are making the rounds at PTO meetings. Burlington residents "have been bringing about how diverse our community is," and Caldwellson, who is black, letting everyone vote, he argues, is a way to be inclusive on that.

Martin Baumann is a German father of four who moved to Burlington in 1999 to work at a consultancy company in Mahan, Vermont, who applied for dual citizenship but was denied. Participated in WINN's efforts to win voting rights for nearly a decade ago. "If any town can make this happen, it might be Burlington," Baumann said.

Kivulika, who's lived in Burlington for seven years, wasn't about to wait for councilors and voters to warm to the concept. As of last summer, he's a U.S. citizen with a spot on the Parks & Recreation Commission, where, he points out, he's the only person of color. ☐

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Seventeen Spoonfuls of Sugar: Will Vermont Tax Sweetened Drinks?

BY KATHRYN FLAGG

Eight years ago, David Hittlerdorf — pushing 50 years old and “obviously overweight” at the time, as he would it — reached to get his weight in check. So the now-CEO of AllEarth Resources started running outdoors and came to a sobering realization: He was drinking more than 1,000 calories a day in soda alone.

“That was a wake-up call,” says Hittlerdorf, who switched to diet drinks and went on to drop about 75 pounds.

Now Hittlerdorf’s company is part of a coalition calling for all Vermonters to cut back on Coke — or pony up some extra pennies to pay for its ill effects: The Alliance for a Healthier Vermont officially kicked off its campaign Thursday for an excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages.

The group is made up of more than two dozen member organizations, including AARP Vermont, Dartmouth-Hitchcock, the University of Vermont Health Network, the Vermont State Dental Society and the American Heart Association.

The tax would tack on additional two cents per ounce onto most drinks with added sweeteners — think sodas, sweetened teas, energy and sports drinks, and fruit-flavored punches. Milk, shakes, unsweetened tea and 100 percent fruit juices wouldn’t be taxed. The tax would raise the cost of an average six-pack of canned soda by \$1.44.

Advocates say the tax would be a win-win: encouraging people to cut back on consumption by hiking prices, and generating revenue — an estimated \$35 million annually — for health and wellness programs to fight obesity and related problems such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood sugar. The alliance hopes the state would reinvest a least part of the revenue in programs that would improve low-income Vermonters’ access to healthy food and health care, better links to school programs and make community grants for sidewalks to help peddle around after school.

According to the Vermont Department of Health, 42 percent of the state’s adults, and 29 percent of its children, are obese or overweight. Obesity-related disease cost Vermont an estimated \$102 million a year, according to the Alliance for a Healthier Vermont, roughly half of which is covered by publicly funded Medicare and Medicaid.

Steve Lefebvre, an emergency physician at the University of Vermont Health Network, estimated — conservatively — that a third of the patients he sees in the hospital ED suffer from health issues related in part to being overweight.

The idea of taxing sugary drinks isn’t new: though so far it has never gained sufficient traction to become a reality. It cropped up in a 2007 report from the legislature’s Health Care Reform Commission, and then again at Attorney General Jeff Amershi’s 2010 Healthy Weight Initiative. Most recently, advocates went to the mat in 2014, when the House Health Care Committee advanced a penny-per-ounce tax proposal, which never made it out of the House.

The beverage industry outspend proponents of a soda tax 90 to one during the last legislative session, according to Tim Zuk, government relations director with the American Heart Association in Vermont.

Are the prospects this year any different?

“The consciousness of the role that sugar is playing in making us sick and driving up health care costs — that



has increased,” said Anthony Iannopoli, an attorney who left his job with the Conservation Law Foundation last summer for a position at the Alliance for a Healthier Vermont. The tax, if it becomes a thing, is a strong believer in sugary drinks — but he’s no fanatic. The occasional sugary drink is a treat and not the problem, Iannopoli said. The fact that the average American consumes 46 gallons of them in the course of a year is.

This month the first proposal to legislate a tax on sugary drinks in the state. Further, the Alliance hired the Montpelier-based government and communications firm KSK Partners to help persuade lawmakers and get the word out on social media.

Iannopoli, no stranger to the legislative process, and grassroots coordinator Emma Richardson will be working the Statehouse halls, too.

“Vermont has defied some of the other trends in national politics,” said Iannopoli, pointing to one recent example: the state’s push to label genetically engineered foods. “The biggest spender doesn’t always win, which is a cause for great optimism for us.”

Proponents figure they have another advantage: this year, too, the state’s roughly \$300 million deficit.

“I’d rather pay for prevention and not let the problem just continue to pay for the problem,” said Rep. Alison Clarkson (D-Woodstock), a member of the House Ways and Means Committee who plans to cosponsor the legislation for the excise tax. Her reasoning? “Thoughtful people are increasingly aware of sugar’s impact on the public’s purse.”

But the prospect of a two-penny-a-ounce tax has opponents gearing up for a fight.

“We think the beverage industry is being singled out wrongly,” said Andrew McClean, a Montpelier-based lobbyist for the Beverage Association of Vermont, a trade association of nonalcoholic beverage manufacturers and distributors in the state. “If the standard is sugar, then sugar is all kinds of food.” Others note, there’s sugar in plenty of beverages that wouldn’t be taxed under the proposal — such as 44-cent fruit juices and chocolate milk.

Among those fighting targeted are Dave and Jenny Royle, the husband-and-wife team behind Burlington-based Royle’s Root Beer. They’ve won best sugar-free and average one-on-one sales in a group serving-beverage and distribute at farmers markets and Vermont restaurants.

The couple is not just worried that a price hike would hurt their bottom line; they’re offended by the characterization of their product as “poison” and “the cause of obesity,” as Jenny Royle put it.

“It has the potential to really devastate us, because we’re so small-scale,” said Royle.

SPONSORING OF SUGAR IN VT



Larson to Leave Shumlin's Health Care Reform Team

Mark Larson, who led the rocky launch of the state's health insurance exchange, is leaving his job as commissioner of the Department of Health Services today.

In a statement, Shumlin indicated Larson decided to step down to pursue other opportunities. "Mark led the department through some challenging times, but no one could wave a magic wand to overcome those challenges as Vermonters could access affordable health care than Mark," the governor said. "Thanks to the work of Mark and others, tens of thousands more Vermonters are now insured. I appreciate his service and understand his desire to take some time to step back and explore new opportunities."

Larson is the latest in a series of high-profile members of Shumlin's Agency of Human Services team to depart since last summer. Last August, Shumlin fired then-senior advisor Doug Racine. In September, the department for Children and Families commissioner Dave Yacovone left voluntarily.

Larson's role in the department has been limited for some time. Last January, Shumlin assigned Lawrence Miller, then his secretary of commerce, to oversee Vermont Health Connect. In September, after Miller had been named Shumlin's chief health care adviser, Larson was stripped of his oversight of the federally assisted insurance exchange.

"The last three years have involved a historic transition in health care for Vermont and our country, and has not been without its challenges. I am proud of the fact that in Vermont we have reduced by half the number of uninsured Vermonters and are on track to significantly reform how Medicaid pays providers for health services," Larson said in a statement. "I am proud to have been part of this tremendous effort. As the department prepares to engage in its next phase of work, it is time for me to move on to new opportunities. I look forward to stepping back to the role of citizen and witnessing the continued progress toward coverage for all Vermonters and more rational ways to pay for health services."

Larson, a former state representative from Burlington and chairman of the House Committee on Health Care, was first appointed to the post in July 2011. He will stay on until March to help deputy Gov. Leri Collins transition to interim commissioner, Shumlin said. The governor said he's looking for a permanent in his place now.

Larson said by text Tuesday, "I don't currently have any specific plans to announce for what I plan to do next."

TERRI HALLENBECK

Passed-Over Democratic City Councilor to Run as Independent

After being passed by Democrats, Burlington City Councilor Dave Hartnett has decided to run for the North District seat as an independent. Burlington Democrats snubbed Hartnett, a longtime moderate Democrat who is wrapping up his second term on the council, to support Councilor George A. Kervel. Democrat and former one-term councilor George called Hartnett out for campaigning on behalf of the Republican candidate, Kurt Wright, during the mayoral election three years ago.

But Mayor Miro Weinberger, who was endorsed unanimously at the caucus, hasn't held a grudge. The city's highest-ranking Democrat has endorsed Hartnett. Weinberger is also running for reelection.



In a press release announcing his campaign, Hartnett quoted the mayor saying, "Dave Hartnett is an outstanding city councilor who has been a large part of the city's turnaround over the last three years. He brings a voice of common sense and compassion to the council, listens to his constituents and is a tireless champion of parks and schools issues. I strongly support Dave's reelection."

Outgoing Democratic councilor Barbara LeGrande, independent councilor Sharon Bushner and state Rep. Joey Donovan (D-Burlington) are also endorsing Hartnett, according to his press release.

AUDIA PRIZEE

State Revenues Take a Hit Despite Promising Signs

The good news: Your household will bring \$1,500 more to spend this year, thanks to lower oil prices.

The bad news: It's more than most annual incomes in Vermont are making, and, as a result, state revenues are heading in the wrong direction.



With that news in hand, Gov. Peter Shumlin and the legislative leaders who compose the state's Emergency Board signed off Tuesday on an \$18 million reduction in anticipated revenues for the next fiscal year which starts in July.

"This means shambles and legislators will have to cut \$14 million to \$18 million more, from the fiscal year 2014 budget the gov unveiled last week. He said he's expecting the news to improve by the time lawmakers sign off on the budget in May."

"We're going to manage to the money we have. It's possible we'll see some growth coming forward," Shumlin said afterward. "It's not an unreasonable challenge."

Economist for Shumlin and the legislature agreed that despite promising signs in the economy related to lower oil prices, the state's General Fund was likely to see \$18 million, or 1.3 percent, less revenue next year than previously thought.

The economists also said the state's General Fund should expect \$10 million less revenue in the current fiscal year. Shumlin said he's already accounted for that \$10 million drop in the budget adjustment legislators are now considering.

Despite the downgrade in projected revenues, economists Jeff Carr and Tim Kervel gave an upbeat report on the economy.

Lawful prices will save Vermonters \$600 million, or \$2,500 per household, in 2013, Kervel said.

"It's like a plane flying overhead, dropping money on the street," Kervel told the House Ways and Means Committee last Tuesday afternoon. "This is finally the next year hasn't been going."

The drop in oil prices hasn't yet been reflected in the economy, he said, but could bring a reversal of fortunes for state revenues when the economists offer a new projection in July.

Meanwhile, personal income taxes, estate taxes and corporate taxes are fluctuating wildly, Kervel said, and the state depends on that revenue more now than it did in the past.

In 2004, those taxes accounted for 50 percent of the General Fund, Kervel said. In 2014, it was 60 percent, he said.

But each revenue is a product of chance, he said — for example, when and how many wealthy people die in Vermont. Last fiscal year, the estate tax brought in \$35 million. During the first half of this one it has generated only \$3 million, he said.

"It's a roll of the dice," Kervel said.

TERRI HALLENBECK

Spoonfuls of Sugar BY JEFF

MacLean and major beverage producers are already responding to consumer demand for less sugary drinks by reformulating products and introducing new ones with reduced sugar content. Industry leaders recently pledged to cut beverage calories 20 percent by 2025.

MacLean also questioned whether an excise tax would be effective. Since the tax would be levied against distributors, they might choose to pass all the cost over all of their products, MacLean suggested — rather than let one group of consumers feel the pain.

Proponents say there's good reason to single out sugary drinks for tax; they contain far more sugar than most people eat/drink. Terrapins and A 20-ounce Coke, for instance, contain the equivalent of nearly 17 teaspoons of sugar — far exceeding the American Heart Association's recommendation of no more than six teaspoons of added sugar per day for women and nine teaspoons for men.

Emergency physician Leffler said that most of that sugar is "hidden" from the average consumer. A sugary beverage should be an occasional treat, he said, not unlike a slice of cake or scoop of ice cream.

"Most people wouldn't think about having six ice creams every day," said Leffler. "We have lots of people who drink six sodas a day."

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, liquid sugar accounts for 36 percent of the added sugar Americans consume, and is the single largest source of added sugar in the American diet.



Where does Vermont's top dec stand on the issue? Dr. Harry Chen, the commissioner of Vermont's Department of Health, said there are some public health reasons to support a sugar-sweetened beverage tax — but that the evidence isn't entirely compelling. Chen said many studies associate increased consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages with unhealthy weight. Evidence is mounting, Chen said, that increasing the cost of these beverages helps cut consumption — but researchers are still trying to determine whether decreased consumption correlates strongly with decreases in body mass index.

Ultimately, Chen said, this is a political issue as much as it is one based in science and health. Blackbox, Gov. Peter Shumlin, has opposed taxing sweetened drinks. Last week, Senate President Pro

Tem John Campbell released a statement against the idea, arguing that it would increase the cost of living for working families and harm the businesses that produce, bottle, distribute and sell sugary drinks.

The question at hand, Chen said, boils down to, "What's the responsibility of the state in terms of ensuring that people do the right thing?"

Government already uses excise taxes to dissuade consumers from buying one product deemed especially dangerous and unhealthy: tobacco. Since 1995, Vermont has lifted the excise tax on tobacco multiple times; it now stands at \$2.75 a pack, bringing the average retail cost of a pack of cigarettes to \$6.54 in Vermont, according to the American Lung Association. The tax pulls in more than \$70 million a year for Vermont's coffers.

Last November, voters in Berkeley, Calif., passed a per-ounce excise tax on sugary drinks. In Mexico, which in 2013 surpassed the U.S. as the most obese country in the world, the experiment is already a year under way. Last January, Mexican officials began taxing sugar-sweetened drinks by one peso — about seven cents — per liter, a year later, a study by the country's National Institute of Public Health showed purchases of sodas and other taxed beverages fell 30 percent in the first three months of 2013 compared to the same period in the prior year.

Will Vermont be next?

"Vermont has always been really progressive in terms of health care and health care reform," said Zak of the American Heart Association. She flicked off a few examples, listing smoking in the workplace, carrying cellphone use in cars, requiring seat belts.

"We're really a mover and shaker when it comes to health care issues," said Zak, "and we're a smaller state, so it does make sense to do it here."

But Jan Harrison, who heads up the Vermont Retail & Grocery Association, reiterated the argument that has won over lawmakers every time a beverage tax has been proposed in the past. "At the end of the day, we all have the responsibility to pick and choose our foods based on what makes sense for us as individuals," he said. "I think it's a really slippery slope of going into [taxing] individual foods. No other state in the country has done anything like this. We would really be out there on the playground, all for the purposes of being an experiment." ☐

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Gregory Brigante Sexton

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Gregory Brigante Sexton, 32, of Morrisville, N.H., was confirmed ill during the early hours of his confirmation, January 12, 2015, due to complications from injuries at his home and in the presence of his family.

After he was taken to Jesus Land in Morrisville, N.H., he was confirmed ill during the early hours of his confirmation, January 12, 2015, due to complications from injuries at his home and in the presence of his family.

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Tony Carl Richey

1961-2015 WINDSOR, VT

Tony Carl Richey, 53, of Windsor, passed away peacefully on Thursday, January 15, 2015. Tony was born in Windsor, Vermont, on February 16, 1961. Tony was a member of the Windsor, Vermont, Episcopal Diocese and was a member of the Windsor, Vermont, Episcopal Diocese.

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Artist Gives Downtown Burlington a 'Mushroom Grove'

BY ETHAN DE SEIFE

Burlington has experienced a growth spurt in recent years, with new construction and renovation projects popping up like mushrooms after a heavy rain. But the downtown core still has a few nooks in which wildlife thrives. In one little niche on St. Paul Street, an unusual species of mushroom did, in fact, bloom last week.

Burlington artist **KATE KATZ**'s installation, titled "Mushroom Grove," has taken root in a recess of the exterior wall of the new Wilbur-Goodman Inn. The piece's strong vertical lines and curvaceous, megafungal canopies reflect an area dominated by dark brick and cement.

In fact, Katz says, as he leads a reporter around his sculpture, "Mushroom Grove" was designed specifically to comment on the Queen City's downtown building boom. "I really think they did an awesome job with the new building, but it's a hard edged kind of thing," Katz says, as an icy winter wind whips the words from his mouth. "The sculpture made up being a weird hybrid of natural inspiration with a really mechanical, structural foundation."



Mushroom Grove



Katz with brightly colored forest

**THE PIECE'S THREE MASTS
APPEAR TO STRETCH UPWARD
ALMOST PHOTOTROPICALLY,
AS IF THEIR AMBITION IS
TO CHALLENGE NEARBY
BUILDINGS IN A RACE
TO THE SKY.**

The folded orange forms, too, belie their construction. While they appear to have started out as discs that the artist later warped and twisted under heat, in reality Katz planned out every curve and contour out every panel. The finished works are steel, the translucent panels were assembled from layers of Plexiglas. It was, the artist says, a challenging, "completely invented process."

Katz, 31, has worked with similar forms before. For an outdoor show in 2006 in Stockholm, Mass., he wrapped early versions of these "mushroom caps" around living trees. His studio, too, brims with works-in-progress and finished pieces that include or were inspired by natural forms. Growing up on his family's farm in Cabot, he says, he "was always out in the woods looking at mushrooms. It was inspiring for me, and it was something to do in a rural place," Katz says.

"Mushroom Grove," notes **DAVID HOSKOTZ**, "was far and away the most vibrant, compelling and interesting" of the proposals that his company received in its call for submissions. Hoskots is development manager for the Burlington-based commercial real estate developer

REDSTONE, which has undertaken the task of converting the city's former armory into the new hotel. He's enthusiastic about the way Katz's installation celebrates the newly created roof. "I like the vibrant orange color against that black brick wall. It just really popped," he says.

BURLINGTON CITY ARTS administered the call for proposals, which elicited about 10 submissions. Hoskots estimates (Katz's name, **KATZ**, is assistant director of BCA's Hoskots stresses that she had no influence on the selection process).

Redstone put out the call, Hoskots says, because the support of local arts "is an important part of keeping the community interesting and vibrant." The company also recently commissioned a sculpture by Burlington artist **KATE POND** for a project in the Old North End.

Katz will soon install another of his sculptures on a patch of land near the hotel's Main Street entrance "Brightly Colored Trees," a variation on a previous work installed at Burlington's Market Building, a stand of arboreal sculptures that are highly naturalistic apart from their coating of electric-and-pink. The artist received \$5,000 from Redstone

for this second piece, and \$10,000 for "Mushroom Grove."

That's a nice commission for a young artist who still has another semester of graduate school to go. In May, Katz will graduate with an MFA from the University of Connecticut's studio art program. Until then, he'll split his time between Wilbur-Goodman, Conn., and his Wilbur-Goodman studio. In the summer, he's the studio manager and working assistant at the **SEVEN HILLEN ARTS INSTITUTE**, an artists' residency program founded by BCA and **FRANK'S VERY NOISEWORKS**.

Katz plans to live in Vermont year-round after he graduates. By that time, wild grasses will surround "Mushroom Grove" — the final step in the project's landscaping. Though the plants selected for the microplot typically grow more than three feet high, Katz's "mushrooms," straddling the border between natural and manmade, will dwarf them. ☺

Contact: ethan@sevenhillsart.com

INFO

11 **Black Katz's** Mushroom Grove, sculpted using 31,000 strands in Burlington between May and early October. realtor.com

How This Movie Ends: Montpelier's Downstairs Video Will Close Next Month

BY MARGOT HARRISON

In case of the few the good, the last surviving Vermont video stores And the Valentin's Day, Montpelier's Downstairs Video will close its doors for good.

In a message sent Tuesday to members and friends of the **SAVOY THEATRE**, **TERRENCE YOUNG** — who owns both establishments — explains the reasons for the closing:

It will likely come as no surprise that the video store has finally reached the end of its profitability. We have kept it going just on fumes but now it is becoming a liability for the Savoy to keep it operating. We will be closing the doors for good as February 16, 2015.

Younk thanks "BENJAMIN THOMAS" for his long and dedicated service to DVD as well as the store's patrons.

Saturday, January 24, is the last day for rentals; the message promises post-rimble for amnesty on DVDs returned by January 26. (After that, if worse, delinquent renters may have to take up the issue with the Montpelier cops.)

**WE HAVE KEPT IT GOING
JUST ON FUMES
BUT NOW IT IS BECOMING
A LIABILITY FOR THE
SAVOY TO KEEP IT
OPERATING.**

TERRENCE YOUNG

From February 2 to 14, Downstairs Video will be open for DVD sales. But Younk doesn't plan to sell off all the inventory. "We will be assembling a core group of important films to utilize as an archive," he writes. "Access and use of the archive is still being determined."

Finally, the message notes, Younk is open to hearing from potential buyers. "Even as the store wasn't profitable for us, employing several part-time employees, it might do pretty well as a single-owner or cooperative venture."

The video-streaming model seems to be winning out. In spring 2014, Burlington bade farewell to its well-known rental mainstay, Waterfront Video South. Burlington's Hollywood Video and Wilburton's Passport Video followed suit, leaving greater Burlington without a video store.

Of course, there are still places to rent DVDs and Blu-rays — the Redbox outlets in many supermarkets, the public library — and plenty of places to buy them.

But has Vermont seen the last of dedicated video-rental businesses? We're guessing a few survive, but the online Yellow Pages are a less-than-reliable guide. So if you know of a thriving rental outlet in your community, we want to hear about it. Drop us an email: @

Contact: sevendaysvt@sevendaysvt.com

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sevendaysvt.com/video_store.html



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For Its 80th Birthday, the VSO Commissions Fanfares — 80 Seconds Long

BY AMY LILLY

The Vermont Symphony Orchestra performed its first concert in January 2014. Right decides on, the orchestra is still doing what it was created for: providing musical nourishment to the people. It's been able to accomplish this while remaining relatively good financial sound. With no bricks-and-mortar home, marketing director **AMY CALDWELL** points out, the orchestra need pay no overhead. And it's one of the country's few state-sponsored orchestras. The legislature allocated \$341,244 for the VSO in fiscal year 2014.

Time for a celebratory fanfare — or seven.

To mark its 80th season, the VSO commissioned seven Vermont composers to write 80-second fanfares. Each up to one of the season's seven full-orcristra programs. Audiences have already heard three — **JOHN MARTIN**'s and **JOEL REICHENBERG**'s in the October and December Masterworks/Sunday Matinee Series concerts, and **THOMAS L. REAGAN**'s in the Holiday Pops concert. Still to come are fanfares by **ALLAN DAVEN**, **DAVE WELLES**, **JOE LAM TAY** and **PETER FARRIN**.

Shawn's Vermont Fanfare opens this weekend's concert, which are the season's official celebratory events. Audiences will walk a 25-foot red carpet into the **FLORIAN GLAVIER** in Burlington and Rutland's



REICHENBERG fanfare, whose lobbers will be followed with balloons.

The program, conducted by **JAMES LANGE**, features another living composer, the California-born and Peruvian-influenced **Gabriel Luis Frank**. Completing the program are Schubert's "unfinished" eighth symphony, and the Elgar violin concerto, featuring the young violist **Elisa Onizuka**, a graduate of Curtis Institute of Music and the Juillard School who studied with Steven Kim, among others.

According to executive director **ALAN JOHNSON**, the idea of fanfares comes from

Hardin, who will write the *Summer Festival* Two fanfares. *Joel's* are more about *MAVIL LANGE* and orchestra manager *ELANOR LONG* than draw up a list of composers, most of whom had composed for the VSO before, with an eye to geographical distribution. They use the list by the ever-gifted *Lange*, who approved, and sent out letters. All seven composers accepted.

Composing an 80-second piece is a challenge. For comparison, Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* lasts three minutes and its seconds. Reichenberg, who lives in New York City and Brooklyn, NY,

found the time limit "tricky but fun" as she writes in an email.

Reichenberg adds that the VSO requested that the fanfare "require very little rehearsal" so the fanfare is a few elements of another work on the program, Stravinsky's *Difficult Airs of Spring*. The composer's *My Dream is Sacrifice* thus became her counter-response to that famous work for better depicting a woman's sacrifice. The fanfare is a "stand against the glorification of killing in the name of higher powers," Reichenberg writes in program notes — a rejection of the "rate" in favor of the season of renewal.

While some composers didn't respond so specifically to work on their designated programs, those panicked determine their instrumentation. The lineup of Shawn's concert isn't him wanting at least one main person on instrument for his fanfare.

The VSO "gave me a checkmark," he says with a chuckle by phone from his home in Keeneland, where he has lived and taught at the college since 1985. "I would have put more percussion in if I'd been allowed," he adds. "The definition of a fanfare is something that has a sense of occasion, that is very brief [that makes a statement or has some kind of public impact]."

Shawn had been working on a comparatively passive piece, sitting a Japanese poet's words to music, when he

Vermont's Gender-Bending YA Novel Gets a Stage Premiere

BY PAMELA POLSTON

Sides of the young-adult novel *M or F?* have been "slow and steady" since its 2008 publication, according to Blimington-based coauthor **JOHN TERRY**. But it just might get a bump from its new theatrical incarnation. *M or F?* — with a script written by Vermont's **DAVE JOHNSON** — will be presented as a "reading with movement, simple costumes and sets" this Saturday, January 24, at **Rutland's** **CHANDLER** **THEATRE** **HALL** as part of the tri-city's Winter Break programming.

Produced by **VERMONT PRIDE THEATRE** at **CHANDLER**, the play features student actors from local high schools, proceeds from the performance will be distributed among GLBTQ organizations at the participating schools.

Tobacco will appear for a talkback following the show. His coauthor, Lisa

Popplemeadow, of Northampton, Mass., will not be able to attend, but she tells *Seven Days* via email, "The always thought *M or F?* would be perfect for a stage production as screenplay, because the characters are striking and funny and the dialogue really pops."

On his website, *Tobacco* introduces *M or F?* like this:

When *Francine* is desperate to get the attention of her crush, her fellow-lover (and guy) best friend *Marcus* suggests that *Francine* dress with her hair out. Two bad *Francine*'s turned. She won't type a word without *Marcus*'s help in the chat room, *Marcus* and *Jeffrey* hit it off.

The romantic comedy for ages 12

and up is "a modern take on the *Cyrano de Bergerac* tale (with a twist)," writes director **CHUCK LAYTON** in an email. "It is a bright, happy comedy of errors about young (and old) seeking love in all the wrong places, using social media as their meeting ground."

It is also, *Layton* continues, "a story about self-discovery, consumption, stereotypes, friendship, love, loss, rediscovery and honesty." Sounds a lot like being a teenager — or, really, a human — in today's world. And the two actors are keeping it real, "providing critical feedback to the playwright about what works and what does not," notes *Layton*, a longtime theatre arts teacher who has worked in local public schools as well as with the **VERMONT PRIDE THEATRE** and **Vermont Pride Theatre**.

Tobacco says he's been "completely



not involved" in the controversy of *M or F?* as a stage production. The guy is busy in collaboration with super-hot selling author *James Patterson*, he'll receive book tour in their *Midlife School* series in

received the 1906 letter "In the middle of the second song, there's a passage, and I thought, 'That's the *furioso*!' he recalls. "It started from an introspective piece, but a sort of just bursts out. In fact, *up tempo*!" — Shuman composes without a computer — "and it was almost frightening!"

Shuman, who grew up in New York City named Vermont Kinsley for his adopted state, even though he admits playfully to being "absolutely straitlaced" that he's still here after 50 years. "I wrote the piece for the feeling of gratitude for longevity," he says. Shuman first came to Vermont as a teenager to attend the Putney School and Kinsley Music School in Weston. His relationship with the VSO dates back nearly as long as his residence in the state. Former VSO conductor Klaus Gasser (1974-1995) and Kim Yasuda (1995-1999) led the orchestra in performances of three of Shuman's works, one of which Shuman commissioned.

Shuman, the brother of actor William Shuman, struggles with agnosticism, which he wrote about in his book *With I Could Be There: Notes From a Private Life*. But he will attend the premiere of his finale. "Stratford and Burlington are two places I can travel to," he promises.

Ten lives in Brookline, Mass., when she isn't teaching at Middlebury College. She has already "conceptualized" her finale, the result will open the May program of MusicWeek's first piano recital and Shuman's fourth symphony: the latter a

sample of late Austro-Germanic romanticism. Ten hopes the piece will give musical expression to "everything I know and love about German music" but also "come out of my current compositional voice." She intends it to reference her Malaysian roots and has tentatively named it *Farfare Langhaus*, after a Malaysian archipelago.

Because of the brevity in the program, Ten says, she will be able to work with "great big gestures!" "I'm not going to be subtle," she admits. "My music leans toward ostentatious!" But at the same time, she adds with a laugh, "I don't stay away from lead notes. I've been thinking on the kind of 'bang' I wish it to be."

Though the finales may be frustratingly brief for audiences, every "bang" of the 1900s 100th will surely be a treat to hear. "There are industries that play almost no new music and just want to play it safe," says Ludwig. "But [symphonies] aren't composed? That's meaningful." ☐

Contact: kly@sevendaysvt.com

INFO

Vermont Symphonic Orchestra celebrates its 100th anniversary with MusicWeek, beginning January 24. 8 p.m., on the Flynn PierStage in Burlington. \$9.00; and the Sunday Matinee to run Sunday January 25 3 p.m. at the Concordant Theatre in Rutland. \$9.50; see vso.org

As it happens, Tebbetts' early background is in theater. He says he's impressed at how quickly the staging of *M* or *FF* — his first book to become a play — has come together.

Niece of Popadevich's numerous lead books has been adapted for the stage before, either, but she's hoping this one will see a full production one day. "The themes of *M* or *FF* focus on friendship, love and the difference between persons and the real person, all of which are particularly relevant today," she writes. "*M* or *FF* was really born for the stage." ☐

Contact: paula@sevendaysvt.com

INFO

Winter Place Theatre opens *M* or *FF* production by the musical *Philo Theodor* of Chandler. Saturday January 24, 3 p.m., at Chandler Place Hall in Rutland. \$10.00; chandlerarts.org

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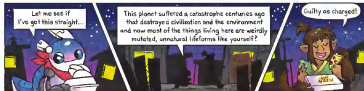
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THEATER



Shuman, actress performing *M* or *FF*

Jan. Meanwhile, Tebbetts continues to work on the popular *Stranded* series with "Survivor" host Jeff Probst, and when he can fit it in, develops other stories of his own.



SARAH "CHU" WILSON

is in her second year at the Center for Cartoon Studies. She is a student member of the website's Slightly Swerved. Her comics and illustrations will be featured in the upcoming issue.



DRAW+paneled is a collaboration between the Center for Cartoon Studies and the Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction featuring works by both independent artists and students. The comics and illustrations are archived at www.drawpaneled.com and can be found on the Center for Cartoon Studies website.



Love and Hate

On a busy Saturday night, an attractive couple hailed me from the front of "Nectar's Lounge and Restaurant," as the bar's rotating signs announced in glowing orange neon. Decked out in tony leather jackets, they straggled one likely Manhattanite Vermonters as a rule, tend to dress down.

The man looked about 40 and had a dark, Mediterranean complexion and thick, wavy black hair. The woman appeared perhaps 10 years younger and vaguely Asian, but who knew? In our increasingly globalized world, so many people are born of mixed-race parents that it's a crapshoot to guess anyone's, and that's probably a good thing. Brainwashed like everyone else, I have to remind myself that racial and ethnic categories are manmade constructions that the powers that be use to sow divisions among the rest of us and consolidate that power. That's a mouthful, but it's true.

"Where to?" I asked as they settled into the backseat. "La Quinta," the man replied, pronouncing it "La Kwin-ta."

"You got it," I said, "and, for what it's worth, I think the hotel is pronounced 'La Kwin-ta.'"

"Well, that's one more thing I'm never going to remember," said the man with a laugh.

"So, you guys visiting from Manhattan?"

"Yeah, we've lived in Montreal the last couple of years. I'm from Jersey, man. Italian-American as they come. Right?"

"Beautiful!" I said. "I grew up in Brooklyn and had a lot of Italian friends. There were some great Italian neighborhoods back then. New York is constantly changing, so I don't know about now. Anyway, I remember there was this one high-end section of Bay Ridge that was considered the safest in the city. I mean, you could walk through that enclave at two in the morning with a thousand bucks pinned to your coat, and nobody'd touch you. And that was because, supposedly, this was the neighborhood where the Mafia kingpins lived."

"Tell me about it," the guy said. "The old Italian guys know something about honor and respect. These

trigger gangs now, there's none of that. They'll just as soon shoot anybody for whatever reason."

I had this kind of talk. It offends me. It actually makes me sick to my stomach. And the odd thing is, you never know when it's coming. It could come out of the mouth of the friendliest guy in the world.

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Here was this guy bragging about his gang — the Mafia — being superior to gangs composed of black men. But God's sake, whether black, white, Asian or Latino, these are violent criminal organizations, making money off the misery of others. It's like arguing over who's the better dictator — Hitler, Bel Pot or Stalin.

In my event, I had to speak up. It's a promise I made to myself years ago. Times when it doesn't appear to go well, I always feel better for making the effort.

I said, "Why do you have to bring race into that? What does that have to do with anything?"

I KNEW I WAS RANTING, BUT I DIDN'T CARE.

"Niggers don't care about people the same way" the woman explained, jumping into the fray. "That's just a fact. If you loved her more, you'd know."

Great, I thought. It's both of them.

"That's just screwed up!" I said, my emotion rising. "I lived around black people in Brooklyn, and I live alongside black folks in Brookline. And I can't see any difference. Every kind of people comes about the same things in life as I can tell — we're all loving and stupid and giving and selfish in equal measure, so group more than matter."

I knew I was ranting, but I didn't care. I got into these contraptions a few times a year, and I hope that my eloquence — in the heat of the battle — has improved with time. At any rate, I've come to believe that there's no wrong way to confront racism. You just show up, speak from the heart and, in quiet, Carrie Underwood, let "Jesus take the wheel." Whatever comes out will be

just fine. (And I'd hope that Carrie would approve of the Buddha, Prophet Muhammad or any other born-again God representative as your personal deity.)

"Hey, I'm sorry if we offended you," the man said. "I have nothing against black people. I was just calling it as I see it."

That's just too easy, I thought to myself. It's amazing how racist others, but somehow no body is a racist.

"Well, maybe you better reconsider," I countered, "because that's some hateful noise you're putting out there."

We rode in awkward silence for the remainder of the ride. As we pulled up to the hotel entrance, the man asked, "So, how do you like driving cab in Vermont?"

"I get asked that a lot," I replied, shrugging the vehicle into park. "And I can answer honestly that I really like it. I meet all kinds of people and I learn a lot about life."

"Do you get into fights with many of them?" the man asked, checking. He was jerking, attempting to ease the tension of the last 10 minutes.

"Not really," I replied, looking back to meet the guy's eyes as I shook my head. "Only with the jerks from Jersey," I added.

My customer laughed. "Giddy is charged, dude — giddy is charged!"

I laughed along, dropping my residual anger toward him and his woman. And I did so because only two businesses hate. That's the message of Gandhi, King and Mandela, the core teaching of all the great spiritual traditions, and a single truth borne out time and again by my life's experience. ☺

All these stories are true, though names and locations may be altered to protect privacy.

INFO

Hackie is a twice-monthly column that can also be found at www.vermont.com. To reach Jeremiah, email hackie@vermont.com or www.vermont.com.

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Dear Cecil,

Simple question here: There are vitamins called A, B, C, D, E and K. But what happened to vitamins F, G, H, I and J?

Chris A. Johnson, New York City

This sounds like the setup for a joke like the kids' classic "Why was an afraid of seven?" Unfortunately, there's no humor in the health sciences, so we don't get a punch line where a nutritionist says, "Sh, eff G, H, I, and J."

But I digress. The answer, like the question, is relatively simple. Most of those missing vitamins between E and K exist, but for one reason or another — mostly scientific disagreements — are now more often called by different names. None, as far as we know, disappeared in the great Vitamin Inc. conspiracy of 199.

Our first five vitamins, A, B, C, D and E, got their sequential names when they were discovered, one after the other, during the early-1900s century search for cures to three common diseases. Many of those arose from limited intake of produce and other fresh food, which is the pre-Whole Foods era used to be stuck together to move by. Scavvy was a vitamin C deficiency that made sailors' gums bleed; beriberi was caused by lack of vitamin B (later B1 — see below); Rickets in children was caused by lack of vitamin D. The general glossiness of English weather was responsible for rampant

rickets, due to insufficient vitamin D.

After these breakthroughs, the great vitamin hunt was on, most of the alphabet was at some point put to use in naming the results. Originally the assumption was that each new discovery would get the next available letter, but the system went to crap when (1) many of the post-E vitamins were later rediscovered as vitamins in the B complex, bearing designations between B2 and B12 (these don't ask what happened to A, B, 10 and 11), and (2) the Germans rebelled and decided to assign letters based on medical relevance rather than order of discovery. Here's a breakdown:

Vitamin P. Known today as the essential fatty acids, of the original and original B vitamins. Should we stick those off? Possibly they might decrease your risk of cardiovascular disease, but (wince the Mayo Clinic) they also might make you bleed and/or send fish fish.

Vitamin G. The American name for what the Brits called B2. Essentially a trace was deduced, and now we call it riboflavin.

Vitamins F and J. H is one that got named under the German scheme — it stands



for Röntgen, German for "X-ray" because that's what it was thought to strengthen. It's now called B7 or biotin (Something similar happened with vitamin K, named for *Koagulation*). Vitamin I was said to have a role in digestion, and has since been identified with various members of the B group.

And finally vitamin J. Beneficial to joints, joints not needed by people, it didn't make the cut.

The second half of the alphabet gets even messier. The bulk of the later would-be vitamins proved not to figure significantly in human growth and consequently were stripped of their status faster than a female priest.

For starters, there was Vitamin L, so named for its apparent role in cell location. Later known as ascorbic acid, L1 is now closely regulated by the FDA. As one of the primary compounds used in the synthesis

of the powerful antineoplastic medications, also Quasidex, it falls into that intriguing category of substances that are fine but potentially fatal. A period TV crime drama about its production is undoubtedly

forthcoming.

Vitamin M is now called folic acid or B9, vitamin P was a name given to the compounds called furosemide, which apparently contribute more to plant pigmentation than human well-being, and Q is an antioxidant called coenzyme Q or Q10. Vitamin N may have been thiamine acid, and it may have helped with "burning, smothering, stifling." Now we just wait 'til the coffee cools.

Vitamin Q goes all but unmentioned in the literature (guessing the name is available should Oprah pursue a career as

a DJ), and the vitamin K story is nearly as murky. Vitamins T, U, V, W, X, Y and Z either turned out to be unnecessary to human health (Z promotes growth in chicks, Z heads wounds in insects) and thus failed to clear the vitamin threshold, or they never existed.

The lesson is all they keep worrying about vitamins. Daily multivitamins in particular are a first-world solution to a third-world problem — the average American consumes plenty of the recommended daily amounts naturally without assistance in pill form. Much of the food in the developed world is impacted with vitamins before it even reaches our plates. Certain vitamins, like A, can even be toxic if you get too much. A US Preventative Services Task Force reviewing 27 studies covering about half a century found no evidence that vitamin supplements offer a benefit for heart disease, or delay death from any cause.

So, really, that punch line has it right after all. Quit wasting your money on generic vitamins and cut straight to Bear Putch Kide. They may burn a hole in your pocket, but a little vitamin N should clear that up.

INFO

If there's something you need to get straight? Cecil Adams can deliver the facts and fakes on any topic. Write Cecil Adams at the Chicago Reader, 11 E. Wacker Drive, IL 60601 or cecil@chicagoreader.com

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It started in a three-story brick annex on 25 open acres overlooking downtown Burlington. With a \$500,000 inheritance from her parents, Queen City resident Mary Martha Fletcher financed construction of the original hospital on the hill in 1879.

The medical center has since mushroomed into a dense building complex. It has gobbled up other area hospitals — the nearby Bishop DeGandria Memorial and Tunny Allen in Colebrook — and sprouted satellite operations across the region that deliver health care to patients from Vermont and upstate New York. Three times the name has changed, from Mary Fletcher Hospital to Medical Center Hospital of Vermont in 1962, then to Fletcher Allen Health Care in 1995, and in November to University of Vermont Medical Center.

Now Vermont's largest employer with 776 doctors, 1,640 nurses and 7,860 staff, the nonprofit hospital's annual budget tops \$1 billion. And it is still growing.

After a recent \$5.7 million "rebranding" the UVM Medical Center wants to add a new patient tower to its congested campus. The seven-story addition, which required a change in the city of Burlington's height restriction, would increase the number of private rooms in the hospital, from 30 percent to between 55 and 90 percent. Total inpatient bed count would stay the same at 647.

Price tag: \$187 million.

Architectural future plans are not limited to the main campus. Hospital officials would like to purchase four commercial buildings and 600 acres in a business park viable from Interstate 86 in South Burlington, a \$52.6 million deal that could greatly expand outpatient facilities there into an expansion campus.

Perhaps, UVM Medical Center now partners with one Vermont and two New



SINGLE PROVIDER?

UVM Medical Center has grown into a billion-dollar megahospital.

BY NANCY RENSEN

York hospitals — a relationship that merges their debt, budget planning and clinical services with UVM Medical Center's. That network currently includes about 1,200 beds and nearly 1,900 physicians.

UVM Medical Center president and CEO Dr. John Brannstrom says all the recent initiatives — the network, the patient tower and the South Burlington expansion — are about "gearing up" to better position the hospital to respond to the ever-changing health-care landscape.

Rep. Chris Pearson (D-Burlington), a hospital neighbor and vice chairman of the House Health Care Committee, was more specific about his skepticism. "I don't see it meaning a lot to families and patients," he said. "And I don't see this working to control costs."

Pearson worries that the focus on hospital partnerships and physical plant

expansion is diverting attention and resources from what he considers a more important priority: universal health care. "I would like to see us cover every single Vermonters before we build belts and whistles."

But some, however, see consolidation and growth appear to be UVM Medical Center's treatment of choice.

WE ARE CONCERNED. IT IS A LOT OF MONEY.

TRINKA KERR
HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE

But there are second opinions. They range from the state's — states are worried about the labor impacts of the proposed patient tower — to that of Vermont's official state health advocate, Trinkia Kerr, whose job is to look out for the public's interest.

"We are concerned," Kerr said of the hospital's proposed land purchase in South Burlington. "It's a lot of money."



Trinka Kerr

Mary Fletcher Hospital



She has pitted herself against a man who endures.

If built, the 350,000-square-foot building would be attached to an existing canopy structure that was constructed in 2005 and connected by a glass-enclosed bridge to the McClure Building that faces Colchester Avenue. The arising building would look as if it were built on stilts. That's because the lower two floors would be open to allow access to the existing emergency department. The third through sixth floors would each house 12 patient rooms. The seventh level would contain mechanical equipment.

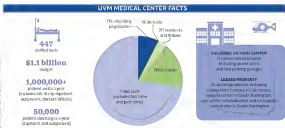
The 128 new private patient rooms would replace the oldest apartment space at the medical center — the double occupancy rooms in the two Shapardian buildings, which hospital officials say can't be renovated to meet current standards. Each of the new rooms would have a bathroom and seating for visitors and be set up to allow for intensive patient monitoring and medical procedures.

Hospital leaders propose that donations could cover \$80 million of the project's \$187 million cost and note in the certificate of need application that \$11 million has already been raised. They

approval of the adjustment of a boundary line between the hospital campus and the University of Vermont.

Getting the Green Mountain Care Board to sign off on the certificate of need could be more complicated. Opponents can ask for "interested party status," which allows them to participate in the process. If it's granted, they can raise issues that the hospital has to address. They can also appeal any decision, potentially slowing down or derailing the project.

Others besides Long are questioning the hospital's proposed "apartment bed



Seven Stories High

It took Martha Long two trips to head in her poster board maps and mementos to an Act 250 hearing in Essex Junction on January 9. The sole challenger to a UVM Medical Center proposal to build a seven-story tower, the Burlington resident made her case in a room filled with consultants for the medical center and the University of Vermont.

The project would house 128 single-occupancy rooms for patients, allowing the medical center to replace outdated double occupancy rooms elsewhere in the complex.

"I'm not opposed to Fletcher Allen building," Long told the three members of the District 4 Environmental Commission, using the medical center's old name. "But I'm opposed to any damage to my properties."

Long lives in buildings on Colchester Avenue, across from and below the medical center. One is her home, and the others are rental properties. "I'm concerned about noise," she told the environmental panel. "It has gotten consistently worse with every construction project." She also worries about increased traffic during construction and after it is completed in the fall of 2018.

Additional funds could be added in the future, according to the "certificate of need" the hospital pitched to the Green Mountain Care Board, which regulates such health care expenditures in Vermont.

UVM has sought to demolish three nearby dormitories to make space for the hospital tower, which sits on its campus. It would also add the hospital to an area offed to create parking for the new building.

and private bonding for \$100 million and predict the project will require an extra \$11 million in engineering expenses once the building is in use. Utility costs and additional staff account for the increase.

The project has to clear multiple regulatory hurdles if construction is to begin this spring as scheduled. Some are local permits. The medical center has already completed the required municipal reviews, but Long appealed the city's

replacement project." The Vermont Professional of Nurses & Health Professionals, the union representing nearly 2,000 workers at the medical center, has requested interested party status in the certificate of need process. Union leaders argue its members will be affected by the design of the new space and were left out of the planning process.

They also question the medical center's ability to finance the project and bow that might impact workers' pay, citing potential liabilities associated with "interest rate swap agreements" that the medical center has entered into since 2004.

"We want to make sure there are still adequate amounts of dollars and other financial supports going into direct patient care," said Mari Cordes, a vascular access nurse at the hospital and union vice president. The union agrees there is a need to replace double occupancy rooms with state-of-the-art single rooms, Cordes said. Members simply want answers to their questions before the project gets the go-ahead from the Green Mountain Care Board.



Single Provider? BY JEFF

In a written response, Spencer Knapp, general counsel for the medical center, disputed the contention that the project might impact worker pay. Knapp also argued hospital staff had "ample opportunity to weigh in on the project's design." Knapp opposes granting the union interlocal-party status on the certificate of need proceeding.

Similarly, hospital officials opposed Martin Long's request for interlocal-party status in the Act 250 process, but the panel granted it. Still Long "I'm not saying they can't build. They just can't build at my expense."

hospitals: the two in Vermont that launched the network in 2011, and two in upstate New York that joined in 2015 — Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh and Elmhurst/Johnson Community Hospital.

The four hospitals have consolidated their debt. They develop their combined \$1.6 billion in budget jointly, share business and planning operations and are beginning to integrate clinical services.

Why would the chief administrator of an 80-bed hospital invite a partnership with a medical center more than five times its size?

Tortuga acknowledges that some of her staff worried the 447-bed hospital

were in the works. "Many of our physician groups are two or three doctors. If you lose a specialist out of a small group, you don't have the coverage. You have to bench strongly to rely on," Tortuga said.

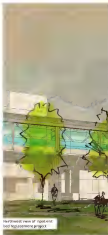
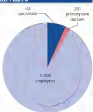
For radiology, pathology and anesthesiology, Tortuga said, "Now there is somebody in Burlington ready and willing to fill in," meaning doctors can pick it up when needed.

Tortuga lists another benefit of the UVM network: greater efficiency in responding to reforms required by state and federal policymakers. "You can pool your resources," she said. "Plus there is a greater sense of political clout. Being part of a bigger entity means that 'I'm

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT HEALTH NETWORK FACTS



\$1.6 billion
combined budgets



Brumsted hopes to persuade all the various regulatory panels of the big-picture benefits of the new building. "It's confident that this new facility will help to provide a better healing environment for our patients and ensure appropriate regional bed capacity for our four hospital network."

A \$1.6 Billion Budget

Judy Tortuga planted the seed for the partnership between her hospital — Central Vermont Medical Center, in Berlin — and the state's largest hospital over lunch with former Fletcher Allen CEO Melissa Estes.

"We talked about creating a system of care," recalled Tortuga, president and CEO of CVMC since 2007. Having previously run Maine's Miller Health Care, which included a hospital, a nursing home, two residential facilities, a physician practice and a home health service, she said, "I was accustomed to working in a system."

That 2009 lunchseed blossomed into the University of Vermont Health Network.

Today it is a partnership of four

in Burlington would swallow up their community institution. "If you want to ask people their concerns, it was less of their culture," she said, pointing out the first-name friendship on display in the halls of Central Vermont Medical Center.

Still, she played ahead because she saw it as the best way to maintain, even enhance, the medical services her staff wanted to offer.

For a decade beginning in the late 1990s, Central Vermont had been part of a 10 hospital network with Fletcher Allen/Elmhurst competitor — the Dartmouth Hitchcock Alliance. "It was mostly a business support system," Tortuga said. "What the Dartmouth Alliance didn't do is provide us any clinical services and resources."

When the alliance dissolved to restructure, Tortuga said, Central Vermont took time to weigh whether to partner again. The eventual decision was yes.

Since partnering in 2011 with Fletcher Allen — now rebranded as UVM Medical Center — Central Vermont has been able to integrate several of its medical specialties with counterparts in Burlington, and

part of the change and I don't feel like I'm being pulled down the health care reform road."

Brumsted described the network as "one company with different stores." While acknowledging concerns about loss of independence and local control when partnering, he argues,

WE DECIDED COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION WAS MUCH BETTER FOR OUR PATIENTS THAN COMPETITION.

STEPHENS MUNDY, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY PHYSICIANS HOSPITAL

"Organizations need to lose a little autonomy to gain value."

The Burlington teaching hospital and its network partners recently changed their names to showcase the academic affiliation with UVM's College of Medicine.

"It is not empire building," stressed the man in charge of the biggest organization in the network. Rather, Brumsted

said, it is about "appropriately gaining scale" to ensure access to health care that is both high quality and affordable.

The network ensures the smaller hospitals have the resources and staffing to focus on the basics while the medical center specializes in the most complex medical care. It makes it easy for patients to go back and forth between health care facilities for treatment.

The lesser altitudes of the last decade are obvious, Brumsted said. "If you don't have a tight relationship, you don't get the most efficient model."

Notably, the increase in hospital mergers and partnerships has given rise to worries that super-size medical facilities will dictate prices to insurance companies and increase costs for patients.

Reformed clinicians that theory. "You have two of the most highly regulated health care markets in the country in Vermont and New York," he said. Vermont hospital budgets and health insurance rates are reviewed annually and adjusted if necessary by the Green Mountain Care Board. In September,

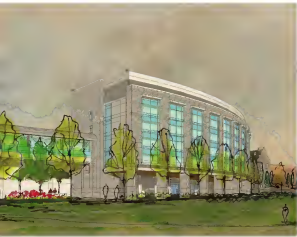


PHOTO COURTESY OF UVM MEDICAL CENTER

the board held hospitals is an average 4.1 percent budget increase and scaled back health insurance rate increases for providers sold on the new online marketplace.

Breneman also suggested there is "an embedded culture" of service at the medical center. "We really want to be affordable," he said, so that the state becomes more attractive for new businesses.

He challenged the contention that competition drives down health care costs. "In a rural environment, I believe you can make a great case that competition drives up the cost and dilutes the quality."

He offered an example. "Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital and Fletcher Allen were locked in a decade-long cardiology competition," Breneman said. "That was not good for the patients."

Champlain Valley had small numbers of open-heart patients, making it expensive and challenging to maintain surgical expertise. Now all open-heart surgery takes place at UVM Medical Center while New York patients needing angioplasty, a more common heart procedure, are referred to the Plattsburgh hospital. "We decided collaboration and



Judy Tar Lavin

coordination was much better for our patients than competition," said Stephens Mandy, CEO of Champlain Valley since 2002.

He cited other benefits of the collaboration for his hospital, which has two-thirds of the bed capacity of UVM

Medical Center. "On the purchasing side, we have been able to save almost a million dollars because we are in a larger system," he said. Also, the medical center is helping Champlain Valley set up a family-care residency as a way to attract more primary care physicians to northern New York. Sixty percent of doctors end up practicing within 100 miles of where they train, Mandy said.

Champlain Valley chose to partner with UVM Medical Center rather than the 734-bed Albany Medical Center because Burlington was closer and gave the Plattsburgh hospital a voice in decisions affecting its former competitor, Mandy said. Representations from the two New York hospitals sat on the network board and vote on the medical center matters, including the budget.

Taragha credits Breneman with empowering the smaller hospitals. "He really listens," she said. "He is very accessible. He makes you feel like you are a partner, not a pawn."

Outpatients In

Close to home, Tarry Alka Campus in Colechester is two south and would

need significant upgrades to meet the long-term needs of the programs located there. One solution would be to relocate its outpatient services to South Burlington's Mountain View Business Park where the UVM Medical Center already operates its orthopedic specialty programs, the spine institute, endocrinology, cardiology and a cardiac rehab program on Tilly Drive.

That's one reason the Burlington hospital proposed spending \$52.6 million last year to buy four buildings and 66 acres in the business park — which stretches along I-89 near the whale sculptures — plus an adjacent 28-acre farm. Most, but not all, of the businesses that occupy the five Lego-block-like brick buildings are already health-related, not all are affiliated with the hospital.

Medical center consultants say the South Burlington property is the only site reasonably close to the hospital with enough open space to meet future outpatient needs. The average in the office park could host three or four buildings while the adjacent farm could support up to 100,000 square feet of development, plus parking.

The medical center's cortices of need application hints, but doesn't spell out, which clinics might be moved there.

Hospital officials argue the time is right to buy — even though development of an outpatient campus might be years in the future. The hospital currently spends \$5.8 million on rent for 29 leased properties and has options to buy the properties that expire in the next few years. More space is needed for clinics such as ophthalmology and vascular surgery. Others, such as the breast cancer clinic, are moving currently.

"This really isn't predicated in expansion," CEO Breneman said, noting the medical center would save money by owning rather than renting. "It is to be proud owners of our resources."

Health advocate Kerr, whose job is funded through Vermont Legal Aid, has filed for insurance parity status with the state board reviewing the proposed purchase. "What does it mean for the cost and care and the quality of care?" she asked during an interview at her office in Burlington.

The mayor's union, the Howard Center and the City of Burlington also have raised questions about the deal.

As with the new building, the Vermont Federation of Nurses & Health Professionals is focused on the medical center's financial health. CA is offered to spend \$100 million on an addition it wants to build now while also creating



Photo courtesy of Vermont Medical Center main campus.

Single Provider? BY NANCY FLETCHER

\$52 million in land and buildings it would develop in the future?

The South Burlington location is another issue. Hospital officials say that consolidating outpatient services there would be more convenient for patients than keeping them at scattered locations — the medical center, Fitch Allen in Colchester and the University Health Center in Burlington.

But Kerr, the City of Burlington and the Harvard Center question how easy it is for patients to get to the business park off Route 116. Those without cars would face challenges because of limited bus service, notes Kimberlee Stratton, assistant city attorney in Burlington. Kerr said transportation has been a concern since the medical center first located outpatient cardiology and orthopedic services on Tilley Drive.

Medical center staff note that a shuttle service operates by appointment, picking up patients who have taken public transportation to the University Mall and transporting them to Tilley Drive. Hospital officials say they would assess transportation needs as development progressed at the site.

Reunited summarizes the tentative focus of the purchase.



Photo courtesy of UVM Medical Center.

"As the academic medical center partner of a four-hospital network, we must ensure we have the resources and flexibility to meet evolving patient care needs," he said when the certificate of need application was filed last spring. "Purchasing these properties would give us the opportunity to expand our campus in South Burlington to meet growing demand for outpatient services

(a national trend), invest in a smart buy-sell strategy, and preserve space on the medical center campus for the most acute care needs."

What's next?

In November, the medical center put the South Burlington purchase proposal on hold, telling the Green Mountains Care Board it would prefer to focus on the certificate of need for the patient tower project. The board agreed to the switch

Construction — whenever it starts — will take three years.

Meanwhile, the hospital network could get bigger.

Brumsted confirmed that "several other organizations are on a direct pathway to become partners," adding that these hospitals are in both New York and Vermont. Fitch Ratings, which upgraded the bond rating for the medical center and its network partners last summer, noted

**CHAMPLAIN VALLEY PHYSICIANS HOSPITAL AND FLETCHER ALLEN
WERE LOCKED IN A DECADE-LONG CARDIOLOGY COMPETITION.
THAT WAS NOT GOOD FOR THE PATIENTS.**

DR. JOHN BRUMSTED, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF UVM MEDICAL CENTER

Earlier this month the board sent the medical center a letter with 27 requests for more information about the tower. More queries could follow because the board reported it was still reviewing the financial and architectural submissions.

Hospital administrators hoped to start construction in May, but there's no guarantee. That depends not only on receiving a certificate of need, but on the University of Vermont receiving approval to demolish the three buildings adjacent to the hospital project.

that the options in Vermont are limited. The medical center already draws patients from the northern half of the state and is unlikely to attract Dartmouth-Hitchcock from its dominance in the state's three southern counties: New York, on the other hand, offers the medical center a potential market outside its traditional service area, Fitch suggested.

Mary Fletcher never would have thought of that. ☺

Contact: nancy@sevendaynet.com

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Bar Class

Draw-and-drink events proliferate in Vermont

BY XIAN CHIANG-WAREN

Creative types have long hit the bottle for inspiration. So perhaps it's no surprise that arts organizations and businesses would lure members to art class with the promise of liquid courage. Night-out events that combine art making and drinks have popped up around the country and are catching on big-time in Vermont. Indeed, the state just got its first dedicated space for booze-infused art classes, Burlington Dance & Sip Studio.

While the details of these gatherings vary with the organization and location, they share a formula: An artist-taught class is spiked with a complimentary adult beverage to temper any painting-in-public jitters and get the creative juices flowing. Supplies are generally included in the entry price and, at the end of the night, participants take home their own original piece of art.

The progenitor of art-and-drinking events in Vermont was the cabaret-like Dr. Sketchy's Anti-Art School, a local branch of an international movement that sprang up in Portland five years ago (Dr. Sketchy also popped up in White River Junction in 2011, with actor Rusty DeWies volunteering as a model.) The concept came to Burlington in November 2011, when the South End Arts and Business Association began its aptly named Art Under the Influence series. It proved instantaneously popular.

"We were looking for an opportunity to really connect the community through creativity," explains Adam Brooks, SEABA's executive director. "We wanted a monthly event that would bring people together, to get people back to their creative roots and get them interacting with us again — and interacting with each other."

The first Art Under the Influence event, taught by Burlington painter Katherine Monteverde, sold out in three days. SEABA has consistently filled the evenings ever since, increasing the frequency of classes to twice monthly and rotating them among its long list of member artists. Venues have included Cideren Cider, Magic Hat Antiquary and Vin Bar & Shop. The art produced in the classes varies with the teaching artist's style and medium.

"The genre that makes Art Under the Influence a little bit different is that we have access to a lot of different artists using different mediums," Brooks notes. "And I think the fact that we're able to move our events around to different venues is exciting to people. It allows people who maybe haven't been to Hotel Vermont or Vin Bar or the Antiquary to explore new things."

In August 2014, Stowe's Hiken Day Art Center jumped on the trend at the request of its members, with a Draw and Sip series taught by local illustrator Eben Crowmark. Some classes hold place in the gallery where "participants are able to view, enjoy and engage with exhibitions featuring internationally and nationally recognized artists, as well as local Vermont artists," notes executive coordinator Susan Hildrey. Perchase Patterns & Lounge on the Mountain Road hosts the events, too.

In Burlington, DNE Arts Center began hosting drink-and-draw events after moving into its new headquarters



on North Champlain Street. The latest session, organized in partnership with Antibar, is a class with a five-hour-aque model — akin to the Dr. Sketchy idea. "We have a really great atmosphere," says instructor Bianca McMillan. "It's not just a class where you show up and you go home. A lot of our artists know each other or are getting to know each other. It's much more of a social event."

Members of DNE Arts Collective get a discount, but McMillan says the series has also attracted plenty of newcomers, both to the center and to art making in general. "We have all skill levels," she says. "There are definitely people who are very experienced, who come with their watercolors and can make a beautiful piece in no time. But then there are others who are very new at drawing,

and it's very rewarding to see people brave enough to come out in a public manner, willing to improve their skills."

While local art-and-alcobol options are many, the state lacked a venue dedicated to the combo—and now. This month, New Yorker Catherine Haver opened Burlington Pint & Sip Studio on Church Street, a counterpart to her blue-nosed establishment in Saratoga Springs. Haver's studio offers daily events and, she says, accommodates several dozen people at once. Most of the state have sold out since Pint & Sip's soft opening in early January.

Haver, a Louisville native, moved to Saratoga Springs a few years ago when her husband got a job in the area. As she looked for ways to meet new people in town, her mother suggested "just going to one of those patio-and-drink places and meeting people that way," Haver recalls. "There are a ton of those studios around the South," she explains.

But Saratoga Springs had none, so Haver decided to start her own. Saratoga Pint & Sip Studio opened in April 2012 and was so successful that Haver opened a second branch in Larchmont, NY, just a year later. Expanding to Burlington, she says, was a natural next step.

"We just had so many people coming from Vermont—I mean, driving two-and-a-half, three hours—and people from Montreal," Haver says. "Just coming from all over the place, because it was the only one in the region at the time."

"Now," she adds, patio-and-drink options are "kind of popping up all over the place, and in different ways. Some are on bars, some do trending parties. But it kind is the best for us, at least, to have an actual, stationary place dedicated to it."

Burlington Pint & Sip seems to be working in disguise: the competition offered by similar events around town. The studio opens Wednesday through Saturday evenings, plus a day class on Sundays, and is available for private events.

A typical crowd, Haver says, might include couples on a first date, bridal couples or community organizations. "It's not a serious thing about art," she says. "It attracts a different crowd."

Haver acknowledges that the popularity of patio-and-drink events is probably fleeting. But she's optimistic about her studio's potential to become an

entertainment standby, "like bowling or going to the movies."

Studios appealing to art newbies, such events can bring working artists out of their solitary confinement. "I think people who normally might be inhibited or shy about coming to a class and painting in front of other people might decide, 'Oh, what the heck? If they're serving a beverage, how serious can it be? It'll be fun,'" suggests Montreson. "It takes on this whole other attitude."

Montreson, who first picked up a paintbrush in her twenties and is now one of the area's most acclaimed watercolorists, remembers feeling those inhibitions about art class. They nearly kept her from pursuing her passion.

"When I went to my first art class in 1987, I didn't want to get out of the car," she admits with a laugh. "I was thinking, 'I remember my fiancé at the time saying, 'Get out of the car' and 'You have to do this!' And I was thinking, 'I don't want to.' What if I'm really bad at it?'"

Montreson will teach another Art Under the Influence class in February—it's already sold out. She says she enjoys the events because they offer both students and instructors a chance to relax. She also gets a kick out of the students.

"People come for different reasons," Montreson says. "Girlfriends will come together, like, 'This'll be really fun! And they'll just be excited to have a couple of cocktails and paint. Other people come and really want to learn about painting. And if they get to have a beer while they're doing it, that's a bonus.'" ☺

Contact: amw@newdayart.com

INFO

The Practice Series: Drink & Draw! Watercolor Wednesday, January 21, 6-8 p.m., at ArtHub in Burlington. \$18.25. artundertheinfluence.com/artinfo.com

Drink & Day: Wednesday, January 21, 6:30-8 p.m., at Helen Gray Art Center in Stowe. \$35.40. hgrayart.com

Styly classes: Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-Sunday at 2 p.m., at Burlington Pint & Sip Studio. \$25-\$50. burlingtonpintandsip.com

Art Under the Influence is sold out this month. For info about future events, visit artinfo.com

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Canine Characters

The boy toys of *Legally Blonde* learn their lines

BY CAROLYN SHAPIRO

Joeey's just a regular guy at home. Surrounded by three more boisterous and mostly bigger siblings, who compete with him for attention and treats and often win, he stays back in the pack and hesitates to speak up. Joeey was the last to be adopted into his Essex Junction home, and sometimes he has to hide his toys under an end table where only he and his little sister can fit.

Soon, though, Joeey is going to be a star—at least in the world of community theater.

This month, he scored the lead-dog role in the upcoming Lyric Theatre production of *Legally Blonde: The Musical*. It's the story of Elle Woods, a party sorority coed who follows her stuffy boyfriend to Harvard Law School and upends everyone's expectations—all while accomplishing by *Brasserie*, her equally well-dressed Chihuahua.

That's Joeey. And he's not the only canine cast member.

Elle's friend, a misanthropic named Puckett, has a bearded pup, too. A hairy French bulldog who lives a privileged life in Burlington's New North End—real name: Enzo—will play the part of Puckett's Rufus.

Joeey and Enzo beat out a dozen other four-legged would-be actors who auditioned earlier this month. Kathleen Leach, the production's dog trainer, says each canine scored high on two crucial criteria: They resemble the characters, and they exhibit a temperament that makes them easy to train, happy to carry up to the human cast and comfortable with the handle of the stage.

"It just shows a willingness of the dog to get outside of their comfort zone a little bit," she says of the trials. "I'm asking a dog to do a lot of new things" for the show.

Joeey is still getting used to the spotlight. For a Chihuahua, a breed that can react nervously and even faintly to strangers, he is laid-back and friendly, particularly when his favorite frozen-chicken treats are proffered. But he's also unassuming and a little shy, and keeps his round dark eyes on his mom, Jojo Girard.

"He's my golden boy," she says.

Unlike Joeey, Enzo lives to be the center of attention. He's a hunk. He'll



swagger from person to person, getting snuggled and scratched and giving kisses or scowls with his semared, wrinkled nose. Outgoing and confident, he pounces on a squeaky toy and performs his trademark can when his dad, Greg Anderson, makes "woof" sounds. When he's not snoring in his beanbag bed at home, Enzo works as a therapy dog.

On a recent Sunday, the two dogs show up for their first rehearsal at Lyric's warehouse space in South Burlington. Joeey, who is 4, arrives in Girard's arms

wearing a black, puffy hooded jacket and a tentative look.

Enzo sports a clip-programmed LED collar that flashes in rainbow colors—Anderson's intention. The bulldog, who turns 2 in February, acts excited to meet Joeey and sniffs his rear. Joeey is a bit standoffish at first, at one point, gives Enzo a mild growl.

"He does stick up for himself," Girard says of Joeey. "He's not a pushover. If the other dogs [at home] get on him, he'll let them know."

Leach meets with each pup and his owner individually in a small room to go over their schedules. Joeey in particular faces rigorous training on the evening weeks before opening night on April 9.

He's already working hard to master his commands. Joeey must bark on cue four times in an early scene with Elle's sorority sisters.

With a spruce of chicken in her fingers, Girard puts both hands together and recites Joeey's cue line: "Where's Elle?" Then she opens her hands wide—his signal to speak. Joeey gives a low rumble, then a more emphatic yip, standing up and twitching his tan-colored tail.

JOEY MUST BARK ON CUE FOUR TIMES IN AN EARLY SCENE WITH ELLE'S SORORITY SISTERS.

Joeey will also learn to run to a cast member, where he'll wait for his cue. In another scene, he jumps into a bag in which Elle carries him. He's already an expert at this trick, hopping right into the purse sitting beside a sister who holds some chicken.

"We have to be doing something right for him to learn that quickly," Leach tells Girard.

Girard adopted her six dogs from All Breed Rescue Vermont, which recently saved an animal shelter to Williston, she also sits on its board. In keeping with the dog-loving themes of *Legally Blonde*, Lyric has picked the rescue group to spotlight during its marketing of the musical.

Both dogs will have to get to know the actors they'll work with. For now, Leach wants Joeey to develop comradery on his performance. Later, he'll practice blocking positions with the cast onstage.

Enzo's role is less regimented. "He mostly just running to the people in the show and getting hugs and kisses, which some of the reasons we chose him," Leach tells Anderson during his session.

One of Enzo's cues is leave the stage course when the actress playing Puckett



says, "Come on, Rufus. It's time for your maintenance!"

That I work for Enzo. He spends much of his time getting adored and embraced, especially during walks in downtown Burlington. Anderson says, When friends walk with him and Enzo for the first time, he has told them, "Prepare to feel like a movie star."

Anderson jokes that Enzo will need a choice lounge to relax offstage or "a little chair with his name on it." At home, the pup has multiple comfy beds, including one beside the

heater, though he usually sleeps with Anderson.

"I have a long-case bed and somehow he takes up all the room," Anderson says. "I don't understand it."

It's just as well that Enzo has a less demanding rehearsal schedule than Joey. Bulldogs aren't built for stunts. "You can see he's got maybe 30 to 35 minutes of oomph," Anderson explains to Leach during rehearsal, as Enzo abandons the toys and flops down with droopy eyes.

"Enzo, I don't think he'll really have a hard time," Leach says during

a break. "But for Joey, I think these first three weeks are going to be a little frustrating for him."

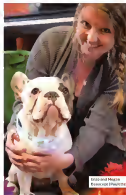
Leach, a University of Rhode Island student who is back home in Wilton working this year, trains service dogs on a volunteer basis for Guiding Eyes for the Blind. Her father, Sean Leach, has stage-managed more than 30 shows for Enzo, so she has worked on sets over the years, she says. But this is Leach's first production as a staff member, and her first dog training gig outside the guide dog school.

Leach doesn't want to diminish the triumph of the humans in *Legally Blonde*, but she says she expects the audience to express a preference by the time they all take their bows — or have wows.

"The dogs are going to steal the show," she vows. ☺

INFO

Legally Blonde: The Musical graduates by Enzo Theatre Company Thursday through Sunday April 9 to 12, at the Flynn Theatre in Burlington. \$23-38. theatretickets.org; byrrr.com



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Picturing the Past

Two new photography exhibits go back in time, and technology

BY PAMELA POLSTON

Images have a power that modern vehicles so far do not: to instantly transport us to other places and even times. Two photography exhibits opening this week, in Burlington and Shelburne, will do just that, taking viewers back decades and to locations around the U.S. and across the pond. Each collection also provides a visual excursion into the satiny richness of pre-digital photography. Younger audiences — particularly those enamored of Instagram's "vintage" effects — may find themselves unimpressed with the qualities of actual film.

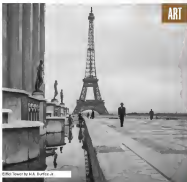
And that's to say nothing of the pictures' subject matter. What do the frames-to-film visions of a Vermont artist in Europe and a former National Geographic photographer have to show us in the internet age? Read on.

At the University of Vermont's Fanning Museum of Art, even the straightforward title "Travelers in Pasture Europe: Photographs by H.A. Darlie Jr., 1951-58" cannot adequately prepare visitors for these 46 black-and-white, silver gelatin prints. H.A. (Herb) Darlie Jr. was an obstetrician-gynecologist from Burlington who lived and traveled with his wife, Elizabeth, in Europe less than a decade after the end of World War II. He was certainly an amateur photographer, but, as his pictures reveal, Darlie had an uncommonly good eye and knew his way around his German camera.

As it happens, though, all of these images and hundreds of others hang in glassed-in boxes — no negatives — for more than 60 years. "A couple of years ago, after my mom died, I went to a picture of the two of them in Europe as I went through the photos and printed one for my dad," says Eleanor Darlie. One day, while visiting the studio of Russian photographer Dan Ross, the younger Darlie told Ross about his father's "cool pictures." Ross encouraged him to send some negatives, and he did — mostly of Paris, at first.

"Dan got back to me and said they were really good!" Darlie reports. "He was amazed at the quality the situation of the blacks. So I just kept sending him more." Ultimately, "more" was some 600 images.

"The images put me in mind of Cartier-Bresson, or August Sander, and



Eiffel Tower by H.A. Darlie Jr.



Police officer Germany by H.A. Darlie Jr.



certainly impressed me at the work of someone who was more than just a hobbyist," says Ross. He advised organizing an exhibit.

Bleaker (Les) Darlie, who sits on the Fanning's board, initially took the photos to the BCA Center for consideration, but, he says, everyone — including Fanning director Janet Cohen — agreed the museum was a more appropriate venue.

"Travelers," hung in the museum's small Walcott Gallery, affords an intimate viewing experience with Herb Darlie's photos. And seeing his images printed, framed and displayed for the first time — in a private visit last Saturday — was particularly moving for the man who took them. "It makes me want to cry," admitted the elder Darlie, who's now 90.

EACH COLLECTION PROVIDES A VISUAL EXCURSION INTO THE SATINY RICHNESS OF PRE-DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

These images represent personal memories shared with his wife long ago. They also reflect back to him solid evidence that H.A. Darlie Jr. was a highly capable "amateur." Asked if he even knew he was such a competent photographer, Darlie said modestly, "Well, I had a little training. I took a few classes."

Les Darlie reveals that his grandfather was also an obstetrician and photographer. Among other subjects, H.A. Darlie Sr. took pictures of all the babies he delivered, and darkness duties often fell to his son. Now, Les Darlie says, he's considering compiling a book with photos by both generations.

For the rest of us, the pictures in "Travelers" are fine capsules from Germany where Darlie was stationed in the Air Force in the early '50s, as well as London, Paris and Venice. He snapped people and places in the scenes between a devastating war and a period of rebuilding.

The exhibit opens onto a large print

that suggests just that. It captures Parisian street vendors laying out their wares in a triangular building. On the left entrance wall are smaller shots of Elizabeth, posing in front of St. Mark's in Venice, and Fleck himself (shot by his wife), at age 27, in old gear at the German Alps.

Each of the images here invites long looks, not simply at the evocative content, such as an old man peeling potatoes, a stern-faced man with a sidekick headgear, urban buildings and bridges, the neat patchwork of a hillside vineyard. What's mesmerizing is the range of props, the busy blacks, the play of light and shadow — and Dorflus's keen compositional savvy. For anyone who loves to look at, and rhapsodize about, black-and-white film photography, "Traveler" is worth a try.

Langstone National Geographic photographer Nathan Bern has shown his work in numerous group shows over the years, but the exhibit opening this weekend at Shelburne Museum's Pittsford Center for Art and Education, "Kodachrome Memory: American Portraits 1972-1990," is his first solo outing. (A mutual friend of his and museum director Thomas Donohue made the connection.) As the title suggests, Bern's images are in glorious color — the intense hues made possible by new-developed Kodachrome film.

In his artist statement, Bern says that in 1972, as a "young recruit" to the magazine's photo division, he "arrived in Vermont with preconceived notions of idyllic villages populated by sturdy, unfashionable Yankees." His editors, he notes, "looked to Vermont in particular as an unexploitable haven of 'little city,' New England — a welcome antidote to the daily headlines of the Watergate scandal, Vietnam War and race riots in America's decaying cities."

Bern found Norman Rockwell-esque scenes in Vermont, all right — an obligatory twice-meeting, tobacco-biting goat or sheep. But his curiosity didn't settle for just "quaint" Vermont. In this series of his tripshot exhibit, Bern also includes large-scale images of a farmhand carrying a can of ketchup, a group of workers in a railroad, impoverished black folks in a St. Albans tenement and a hobbesque laborer — laboring for a business that would soon decamp



Leanna Fanny, New Canaan, 1972, by Nathan Bern



Sabotage and U.S. Troops at St. Augustine, Fla., by Nathan Bern



View from the Shelburne Inn, Shelburne, 1972, by Nathan Bern

to cheaper factories overseas. Though he didn't know it at the time, Bern's pictures capture Vermont at the cusp of an economic, political and social sea change.

The exhibit's other two sections culled memories from the South — in urban and rural communities along the Mississippi River, and in Bern's native Florida. These mood is different than in the Vermont pictures, and they nearly evade heart.

"A lot of my work was about identity," Bern said during a preview of the exhibit last week. And so the theme of "all-American stories defined by geography" common to National Geo served as an organizational thread for "Kodachrome Memory" as well. ("No more than 10% of the shots in the exhibit were published in the magazine, he said.)

The photographer noted that over time his images became "less dialectic" and more abstract. His photos of laborers, farmers and craftsmen are both documentary and elegiac — recalling the nobility of the oppressed style that Dorisinda Lange gave her Dust Bowl subjects. But other pictures only hint at a story: a detail from a worn storefront in Memphis, a young woman with large black hair waiting for a bus, a large-scale print taken from a marker in historic Vicksburg, Miss., its white letters lapping off a bright-blue background with the help of deep drop shadows.

Bern enthused about the "metaphysical conversation" that he saw in that battlefield marker: was history, an endless stream of words that might be about

so many battles. Because he "conceived" a section of the text, a viewer can't really make sense of what it says — which was the point. The image becomes a boldly typographic abstraction that suggests the incomprehensibility of war.

Perhaps no one born in Florida could have it without a sense of humor. Bern exercises his in 1980s portraits of lynch, such as an enormous crocodile — or is it an alligator? — advertising a roadside stand, tourists at Cape Canaveral posing with an "astronaut," a table full of "the rich people at a party in Palm Beach" and the like. "I think this body of work has the most fun and consciousness for me," Bern said.

Even so, he also captures the fearful eyes of an illegal immigrant peering through a window shade, the weary but resolute heroic face of a female cotton-mill worker, and pair of styles' basement laborers wearing multiple hats each.

"Kodachrome Memory" is an engaging visualization of human stories in three distinctive areas of the United States. What they have in common is the perceptive eye of the beholder — and, full, living color. ☐

INFO

"Kodachrome Memory: American Portraits 1972-1990" by Nathan Bern, January 20 through May 13 in the Pittsford Center for Art and Education, Shelburne Museum (shelburnemuseum.org)

"Twentieth in Portraits: European Photographs by W.A. Burges Jr., 1857-1911" through June 19 in the Woodstock Gallery, Fleming Museum of Art, UVM, Burlington, VT. Opening on Tuesday February 12 5:30 p.m. UVM.edu/Vermont

Good for the 'Hood

Taste Test: ArtsRoot Kitchen, Burlington

BY HANNAH PALMER EGAN

On a recent, stormy Tuesday night, a faculty of four, plus a couple of friends, struggled into a Burlington bar. A young girl—maybe 4 or 5—was tucked into a pink hat, mittens and jolly pajamas. A stalled animal dangled from her grasp as she shuffled to a table.

It was not the crowd you'd expect to see at the longest ArtsRoot. But lucky for the industrial space—with its soaring ceilings, exposed pipes and murals suggesting youth and rebellion—feels surprisingly homey.

Three months ago, ArtsRoot founders PJ McIlroy and Felix Wal introduced a new venue at the Pine Street gallery/performance space/bar/restaurant. Chef George Lamberstein, who had been serving weekly pub-style meals there since January 2014, took over the kitchen.

Lamberstein comes with a fine dining background. After culinary school, the South Real native spent years slinging high-end cuisine, including at Burlington's Hotel Vermont and now-closed Pabst. At those places, the menus weren't his to make or change. Now, the chef says he's glad to get out from under the white tablecloths. At ArtsRoot, service is informal; orders are placed at the counter and delivered by a food runner.

"I've always really liked a casual setting," he told *Seven Days* via phone last week. "I want it to be fun! I go into all these places and it's not fun." His food, Lamberstein hopes, will embrace—rather than be—the experience of going out. Which makes sense, considering ArtsRoot's mission: to "destory spathy" by cultivating community engagement and face-to-face human connections.

While bringing people together for cocktails is a surefire way to engender connections, the food at ArtsRoot actually seemed like an afterthought. The menu changed constantly. Service was scattered and unreliable. The 40-seat dining area felt more like a left party than a place to break bread. It was as if McIlroy and



Photo by Christopher

THE SUPPLE STEAK CAME SCATTERED WITH ROASTED CRIMINI MUSHROOMS, WHICH WERE BUTTON-SIZE BOMBS OF FUNGAL ESSENCE.

Who were trying to figure out how to serve booze (and food) in their space without actually running a restaurant.

But for Kitchen 30, ArtsRoot has brought on a serious chef who puts creativity with skill. The friendly, capable front-of-house staff seems to genuinely care about delivering his food while

it's still hot. On one recent visit, our bartender took a drink order, made the drink, and returned with those and a set of side plates (so as in sharing dishes) in under three minutes—far faster than I've experienced elsewhere at Burlington's hottest establishments.

During my visits, we kept nearly to beer—Diva from Burlington's Piddlerhead Brewing, K&Ls from nearby Queen City Brewery—but French wine, too, and a full bar for those who prefer harder stuff. One night, I drank Bokernikizen (Citizen Cider, frosted with a dust of bourbon). Who knew that Burlington's totem color would go so well with bourbon? ArtsRoot, that's who.

For food, Lamberstein's everyday menu is what. Its offerings, which the chef

says he built around "fast-food flavors," are squarely grounded in pub cuisine. Dishes include sandwiches (grilled or pickled egg, ham), appetizers (popcorn chicken, market salad), and sandwiches. A cornucopia was the sole object to break the snack/app/sandwich mold when I was there, though Lamberstein debated several new dishes last weekend. Those included a few more entrees and sides, and some smaller plates that I tried as specials.

One standout was the tongue delicata—rings of velvety seared tongue.

0200 FOR THE WEEKEND AND 10



More food after the classifieds section. bit.ly/1000

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SIDEdishes

BY HANNAH PALMER EGAN & ALICE LEWIS

Sweet Wheat

RED HEN BAKING POWDER USING MOSTLY LOCAL GRAINS

As of mid-January, RED HEN BAKING is ensuring the vast majority of its wheat within 150 miles of its Middlesex bakery. The bakery stores over about 5,000 pounds of bread, pastries and other baked goods weekly, turning through about 7,000 pounds of flour.

locally grown, organic wheat to meet Red Hen's weekly demand. Moving that quantity of product across the border posed challenges, but after months of logistical planning, the flour started flowing earlier this month.

New Red Hen bakes most of its bread using a custom blend of the Quaker wheat. Says George, "The really interesting thing is that the quality is fabulous. It's as good as anything we've ever used."

That's great news for him, as midwestern wheat has become increasingly unreliable in recent years. After last year's disastrous crop, most American bread-baker mills

had to source organic grain from South America. Prices skyrocketed, and quality became a concern. "It was really quite odd," George recalls. "We scrambled and got [flour] from wherever we could. King Arthur pulled the plug completely

on their organic line [for a time]. They have a policy of using only American-grown wheat, and these past years' any organic wheat available. It was a real crisis."

George says he'd always been interested in supporting local grain farmers but assumed the Midwest would remain his main source. "That all of the sudden, it turned around," he says. Los Perros Langreix, Martin de Cuchas started selling organic wheat or past the right moment. What's more, George says, owing to the farm's crop



Top of the Hill

UPSCALE RESTAURANT OPENS IN UTOPIA

When Seven Days last spoke to CHAD HANLEY, in 2010, the French-trained chef had recently returned to his native Jeffersonville after years cooking in the kitchens of Ray Yamaguchi and Manahara Morimoto. Back then, a cooking gig at the Utopia wasn't making much use of Hanley's skills for haute cuisine. He'll need those refined touches when the RESTAURANT STEVEN HILL, located at the newly reopened Stearns Inn, debuts on Thursday, January 22.

Hanley was already catering at the inn for private events and social events, who sold the business last summer. Now "head of estate," CHAD HANLEY made major renovations to the hill, including a remodeled restaurant space.

Besides Hanley, the restaurant's team includes noted Vermont bartender and award-winning chef-founder owner HANLEY. They'll provide over an elegant dining room and the more casual rooms of the inn, such as serving what Hanley calls "a rustic New England take on food."

Vermont-inspired dishes will include Eden Hill pork and beans, a combination of braised local pork belly, "saucy legumes" and a maple-poached egg. The menu also emphasizes Massena-better-crafted seafood, including scallop-and-corn chowder, grilled Atlantic salmon and a New England clam bake entrée.

Hanley, a son of Jeffersonville's HANLEY GENERAL STORE, continues the family tradition of making local from scratch in his kitchen at Eden Hill. His cured meats also include a more ambitious charcuterie plate, paired with Vermont cheese.

Even the restaurant's desserts show a local touch. One option is an apple-cheddar spice cake served with rosemary-olive oil ice cream.

Starting this week, Eden Hill is open Thursday through Sunday for dinner. For now, breakfast service is limited to guests, but Hanley hopes to serve three meals daily to the general public by summer.

—A.L.



Red Hen Baking Powder

According to owner HANLEY GENERAL, Red Hen has been buying 20 percent of its grain from Vermont wheat farms for several years, but the rest came from a cooperative organic mill in western Kansas. By year's end, all that grain will come from a family-run farm and mill in Quebec.

A couple of years ago, George met the farmers of Los Perros Langreix, located in Les Cedres, Que., just west of Montreal in the St. Lawrence river plain. Recently, the 1,500-acre farm began milking enough

SIDE DISHES BY P-10

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in hectic, any-breeding-and-devised-with honey and a bit of chile. Another winner was a plate of house charcuterie. This featured a selection of porky pils, flecked with Crutini and pistachios and served alongside a sifton soup of chicken-liver mousse.

While the pils (now on the menu as Pils de Campagne) played with almost both upscale and down, and with flavors sweet and savory, the mousse kept a beautifully even keel. Underpinned by a whinger of wine, the course was nice, somewhat solo on buttered toast. And if the liner ripped toward a market of loss, a slice of Lamberton's plump-but-wet apple/ ancho chile jelly righted the spread to a near-perfect balance.

Across the menu, the chef puts his training to work. Using advanced techniques to reveal unexpected subtleties of flavor, Lamberton's condiments (he makes an array of pickles, preserves and fermented items in house) tend to elevate dishes from good-to-excellent. And though the regular menu is pub fare, frankly, the chef gets fancier when it comes to the night's specials.

One night, a flatignon made an impression. Perfected on a heap of faroussely smooth, buttery mashed potatoes, the apple steak came scattered with melted cream macadamia, which was buttressed by horns of fungi, onions. Whole shallots, some side-coated with butter and herbs, fell apart in layers. Each piece of the dish acted as color night in a point. The shallots' sharp flavor provided a splashy contrast to the first-of-its-kind of the macadamia, even to the blood of the steak and creamy snow-white mash dominated the course.

The popovers chicken, served with luscious smoked butter for dipping, was an exercise in food-chicken theory. Its elegant, moist bread was thick enough to crackle when I bit it, but light enough that it didn't dog the dish into a greasy mess. The popover-topped crackers were an ample starter for four, or a solid meal for a single.

If the flat and that comely delicate chicken seem to stray from Lamberton's lowbrow flavor mission, the Artisanal burger shot hot food straight from the hip. Cooked through and through (not to say particular thing), the Angus beef party was as thin as my front diner grille and rolled with fatty burger-chase flavor. Maybe it was the "Mexican" cheese, or the mystery "special sauce" (a blend of ketchup, mayo and house-made relish), which Lamberton declined to divulge in much detail.

"It's my take on the Big Mac," he



The dining room at Artisanal



The Artisanal burger



Poster plate

allowed. "That's, like, the most iconic dish in the world, but it's so good I wanted to make a good one."

Accompanied by golden steak fries (temp sweeter, seasoned with herbs) and spicy homemade bread-and-butter pickles, it was a McDouglough knockoff.

Pickles responded in a South End smoked-meat sandwich, stuffed with soft cubes of brisket that had been braised and smoked in house for days. Properly pink at the edges, the meat married well with grainy mustard spread on crisp breaded rye.

While many dishes are fired, straight-forward and served with a pickle, Lamberton's cooking shows forethought and care. The bill of fare leans more toward gastropub than on main bar fodder.

One gastropub hallmark is to present familiar dishes in unusual forms. In a fan take on General Tso's chicken, Lamberton cooked tender loaves of pork in the expected straightforward way. But then he stuffed them into pillowy buns with red cabbage kimchi and pickled chiles for a groovy, finger-licking sandwich.

And few things are more old-school Vermont than a pickled egg — a forgotten favorite from my youth, typically found at gross-out or cheesecake and deli counters. At Artisanal, boiled eggs first in a pair of Sriracha-spiked red house-made vinegar. Served in a short glass, an egg with its spicy, more sharp vinegar overtones, had little in common with those I'd had as a girl. But for a \$2 snack — perhaps paired with a Stouffville (Artisanal drink special) a \$12 can and a shot of whiskey for \$7 — it really cut the mustard.

There's one thing the menu lacks, it's dessert. Yet on one of my visits, Sriracha crepes — ordered from the list of nightly offerings — offered a sweet finish to a meal among friends. In those, a heavy dollop of cream (richer, melted) into three-folded, luscious crepes, topped with glossy discs of candied orange and drizzled with house-made caramel.

That night, we lingered to savor the citrusy cream-laden crepes into our mouths. The tables around us were full. Our drinks and dinner, people of all ages and walks of life talked and ate, art projects, politics, work and family.

And that's when it dawned on me: The Artisanal dining room had transformed from disorganized left scene to something Burlington's South End had been sorely lacking — a neighborhood restaurant. ☺

Contact: karnash@secondstreet.com

INFO

ARTISANAL RESTAURANT, 400 Pine St., Burlington, 847-9406, artisanal.com

Rolling in Dough

Chefs share tips for making pasta at home

BY ALICE LEVITT

In the late '90s, when I was an ironic teen with a thing for infomercials, my favorite featured the shiny Ron Popeil shilling his Popiel Electric Pasta & Sauce Maker. But I didn't enjoy it just for the laughs. I secretly coveted Popeil's all-purpose noddler, which could whip up Italian every pasta, summer fruit pasta or Russian borscht pasta, as he told his enraptured cohort in the infomercial.

But the noodles were so soft that they turned to mush as soon as they hit boiling water.

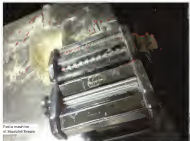
The Popeil debacle led to a new age of nonsensical pasta-creating attempts on a hand crank machine I bought at T.J. Maxx. Somehow, pasta ended up. It became my culinary life line.

But the inspiring trend of housemade pasta at local restaurants made me decide it was finally time to knock it down

finally returned to Italy when he was 7.

Spooker short, The missing told off, and my cooking is now in a pasta phase — not unlike Picasso's blue period, but with infinitely more calories. While I wrestle with my own takes on risotto al nero and gluten-free spaghetti, I share two of my triumphs here.

THE DIFFICULTY OF ROLLING THE FORGIVING PASTA INTO THIN TUBES IS BALANCED BY THE JOY ON THE PALATE.



Pasta machine at Woodford Tavern, 2017

In my twenties, I realized that something was missing from my life. It was a Popeil pasta maker. By then, they were no longer being made now (they are again now), so I had to try to buy one used. I ignored the unfavorable online reviews with visions of chocolate desert pasta dancing in my head.

I consider myself a pretty decent home cook, but no matter how I adjusted the basic recipe, I ended up in tears every time I tried to use that bloody machine. If the dough deigned to extrude from one of the "12" pasta-shaping

and overcome my fear. I resolved to go to the source and get training from two of the most skilled local pasta specialists.

Richard Traven's executive chef, Eric Martelle, worked his way through the ranks at New York pasta palace Del Posto before returning to his native Vermont to work at the new shuttered Panera. He would represent my education in new school, haute-cuisine noodle making. On the Old World end, I would do a morning-long stage at Junior's Rustica with Prince Chocchi, the scion of a famed marble-rolling clan whose

along with the truck. I learned from the experts. But don't tell Mr. Popeil — I'm not even trying to get my hand around his French Champagne pasta.

Last Tuesday, I dropped in on Martelle and Woodford Vermont executive chef Michael Glavin as they prepared for the Tavern's weekly Handcrafted Tuesday. I arrived just in time to help mix Martelle's chicken spaghetti in the kitchen's small Acorn pasta machine.

Dumping hot's Red Mill chicken flour into the machine with eggs and water, the chef explained that it's important to him to offer such gluten-free options. "I would never deny any diner lunch neck's cause you can't eat flour," he said, alluding to the lactose dish on the regular menu. "I love pasta so much, I can't even imagine. Gluten-free people deserve to eat cool stuff, too."

Martelle, who also fled his trade at New York landmarks Per Se and Lincoln Ristorante, focuses on making innovative pasta as well as no-standing comfort food. A few weeks ago on Handcrafted Tuesday special that incorporated the chicken pasta was octopus bolognese. The cephalopod was ground and stirred with preserved lemon.

In the machine's next life, the chicken mixture appeared neatly like a broken pecan candy bar that extruded quickly. As I



cut the pasta and rolled it into coils, the two Western lineages. Martelle said that was purely due to my novice clumsiness and partly to the brittle nature of the pasta.

But when he served me a sample dressed in olive oil and Aleppo pepper, it was as slippery and toothsome as any wheat pasta. Since Martelle left Del Posto, he told me, the restaurant has begun serving a gluten-free pasta that engenders. It tastes like he's not far from performing such a feat himself.

Still, there's no real replacement for basic pasta made with all-purpose flour, so I asked for a tutorial. A Rustica dishwasher who professes to be alerted just as "hot" took me through the finer points of rolling out the dough and passing it through the manual press.

To build gluten, it's important not to cut corners, Josh emphasized. We started by using the machine's widest setting, then folded the sheet of dough over and over and pressed it through

again. Once the texture suited Josh's liking, we took the dough through thinner settings one by one. We ended by sealing it through the machine's cutter, resulting in lengths of tagliatelle that we drained in large red-sauce pots before leaving them to cool on a hotel pan.

I ran to Healthy Living to gather ingredients, then headed home to make my own version.

Tagliatelle With Short Rib Ragù

Pasta:

4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
3 eggs

Ragù:

2 pounds beef short ribs
1/2 to 1/3 pound black
1/2 tablespoon cumin
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 agnoli, preferably pasta, to taste
4 cloves garlic, crushed
5 tablespoons tomato paste
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup red wine
2 1/2 cups beef stock
6 kale leaves, finely chopped
2 tablespoons olive vinegar

Garnish:

Consider hand-welded Pieri Ragout cheese

FOR THE PASTA: Combine flour and salt in a large bowl, then form into a well. In another cup, beat together eggs. Pour beaten eggs into center of well, then add flour to eggs, little by little, by hand.

Continue to work dough until it feels like soft clay. Vacuum seal dough or wrap it in plastic and let it sit for half an hour to two hours.

On a heavily floured surface, roll out dough until it's thin enough to begin freeding through your pasta machine. Don't have a pasta machine? Continue to roll with a rolling pin or wine bottle until light shines through.

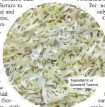
If you do have a machine, put pasta through several times, folding over to build gluten, until pasta is thin enough to pass through the smallest setting. Cut and flour pasta and reserve.

Once you are ready to cook, boil pasta for about three minutes. It goes quickly, so be vigilant! Shock it in cold water before adding to the sauce.

FOR THE RAGÙ: Season beef and coat in about half of the cumin and the salt, pepper and agnoli to taste. Sear on high, then set aside. Decrease heat to medium and sauté garlic. After a minute

or two, combine tomato paste, the rest of the cumin and the flour in pan until lightly toasted.

Increase heat and add red wine. Cook down for a few minutes, then add beef stock. Return to low-medium heat and replace beef. Drain, covered, for two or three hours, until meat is just easily pulled apart. Pull into chunks and return to sauce. Add chopped kale and vinegar to water and stew until tender. Add pasta to pot and thoroughly combine with sauce. Serve with a shower of grated Consider hand-welded Pieri Ragout.



was preparing butternut-squash-and-spinach gnocci for a special that night.

Such specials are collaborations between Checchi, Buttermilk's chef Joe Perella and owner Franko Infante.

For now, those are the only dishes in which Checchi's pasta appear, though he hopes to begin making all of the restaurant's noodles and pastas from scratch in the coming months. Many chefs use potatoes and flour in equal mea-

sure when making gnocci, Checchi said. But he prefers to keep flour low to maintain the dough's elasticity. In fact, it's not always easy to work with dough as soft, but the difficulty of rolling the long-pasta into this texture is belated by the joy on the plate.

Before I left, Checchi asked if I'd ever had gnocci with Gorgonzola cream sauce. He detailed his traditional recipe. I hinted, then went home to create my own version sans heavy cream.



Butternut-Squash Gnocchi With Gorgonzola, Lavender and Pear

1 butternut squash, halved and de-seeded
4 potatoes, halved
Punch of salt and pepper
1 cup grated Parmesan
or pecorino Romano
4 eggs
1 cup flour
2 slices pancetta
1 pear, sliced and chopped fine
1 tablespoon butter
4 ounces Gorgonzola, cubed
1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon dried lavender
2 tablespoons milk

FOR SQUASH: Season squash and potatoes with salt and pepper, then cover in oil and roast at 400 degrees for about 30 minutes, until soft. Let cool slightly, then use your hands to squeeze out any excess liquid. In a large bowl, wash both finely. Add a pinch each of salt and pepper, the grated cheese, the eggs and the flour.

Once the mixture is thoroughly combined, and lots of dough is in long tubes in a floured surface. Cut each tube into segments about equal to the length between the bottom two bones of your pinky finger. When all the gnocci are ready, cook them in boiling water until they all float. Pear out and shock in cold water.

FOR SAUCE: On high heat, open pancetta, then reserve. In the same pan, melt butter on medium-high heat and add pears. Cook for a few minutes, then reduce heat slightly and add chopped Gorgonzola. Once it's melted, add lavender and a bit of milk. Cook until well combined and slightly reduced. Add pasta and coat in sauce. Serve with a side salad. ☺

Contact: info@buttermilkny.com

Joe Checchi with a tray of gnocci at Buttermilk

calendar

JANUARY 21-28, 2015

WED. 21

ART

GRIM & GRIM FURLEQUEL Artists interpret the poses of a late burlesque model in this one-night event on a theatrical stage in a room. Artists, Burlington, 8 p.m. \$25-\$44 includes one drink. 1180 Central Ave. 554-7544

HICK HEDDO Inspired by Vermont's diverse landscapes, the artist and author leads a hands-on exploration of natural pigments. Brandon Park Library, 6 p.m. Free. Info: 822-4536

ENTERTAINMENT

KELLEY MARKETING MEETING Marketing, advertising, communications, social media and design professionals examine ideas for local nonprofits in a lunch and learn session. Burlington Community College, Burlington, 7-8 a.m. Free. Info: 865-6496

NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT FOR TECH

PROFESSORS Motivate entrepreneurs and build careers with their knowledge of local economic development at a lunch and learn session. Community College of Vermont, Windsor, noon-2 p.m. \$20. Info: 736-5643

COMMUNITY

NEED TOWN VOTING RIGHTS DEVELOPMENT Advisory Marking Registration is a conversation with City Councilor Robert Surget and Linda Dale. Meet for advice, the pre-registration for the upcoming Burlington ballot. Green Street Synagogue, Burlington, 1:30-4:30 p.m. Free. Info: 853-2345

OPEN SPACE SUMMIT MEETING Local residents the future of municipal spaces quickly and the problems of the Burlington College/Plaza Center. Deane Hotel, Burlington City Hall Auditorium, 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 863-2345 or 853-5275

PEER SUPPORT CIRCLE If a candidate is seeking an equal-aided party to a candidate without getting advice or a helping position. The Wellness Co., Burlington, 5 p.m. Free. Info: 232-5602

PURPLE FORUM On Thursday County residents after 10:00 AM about intersection improvements, roadway corridor studies and more for fiscal year 2015. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, Newark 8 p.m. Free. Info: 848-4482

crafts

CHITTER & NEEDLEWARRIORS Coaters, sewers for most fabrics. Burlington Memorial Library, Colchester 5-7 p.m. Free. Info: 284-9683

EDUC.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE Healthy donors give the gift of life. Don't need blood? Join for snacks. Various locations. Statewide. Free. Info: 800-733-2367

TECH TALKS PROGRAM Teens answer questions about computers and devices during one-on-one sessions. Dorothy Adams Memorial Library, Shelburne 3-5:30 p.m. Free. Pre-registration is free. Info: 876-4000

VALLEY HUNTER Local guide for the weekly hunt of only, also known as the hunt. Big Picture Theater and Cafe, New Bedford 5 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. Statewide. Info: 486-8994

fairs & festivals

STONE HEWER CARAVANS The first annual Stone Hower Caravans is a week-long of every weekend, including snow golf, ice carving and live music. See stonehewercaravans.com for details. Various Stone Hower. Prices vary. Info: stonehewercaravans.com

film

FROM HOLLOW FILMS: CRAFT IN AMERICA Art lovers, except the award-winning PBS miniseries about how artists shape the United States cultural heritage. Robinson College, Burlington. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 863-5499

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MUSEUM: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MUSEUM Michael J. Jackson stars in Ryan Cagler's award-winning 2013 drama based on the 1955-1968 period of King's life. State Street in Colchester. Colchester Center St. Michael's College, Colchester 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Free. Info: 554-8563

HONOLULU FILM FESTIVAL Hawaii's first film festival, since 1968, and is a national and international event. The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. See hawaii-film-festival.com for details. Big Picture Theater and Cafe, Westfield 5 p.m. Free for students. Info: 486-1994

A PRIMA APPLAUDO Celebrating actors, performers, actresses, and the role of the actor in the arts and beyond. Colchester Arts Center, 31 February 7 p.m. Free. Info: 240-2593

WED. 21 & 22



Hot Off the Press

According to the *Rolling Stone*, singer-songwriter Caitlin Carty is "hooking lightning" with her latest album, *Acoustic Skyline*. Produced by acclaimed songwriter Jeffrey Rosenblatt, this just-released album features an all-star band headlined by the Vermont native. With quiet grace and a more than 30-year career, Carty effortlessly travels among folk, rock, country and blues. Finally seeing her lightning also with the acoustic guitar, the New York City-based songwriter gives life to poignant lyrics that resonant long after the last note. Born and raised in Vermont, Carty returns to her roots with these compelling new songs in song.

CAITLIN CARTY

Saturday, January 24, 7-9:30 p.m., at West, Rutland Town Hall, 542 E. Info: 438-2553, caitlincarty.com



Contemplative Crooner

The only thing Zak Trojano loves as much as fly-fishing is music. Growing up in rural New Hampshire, the singer-songwriter put down his fly rod only to pick up instruments. Whether his musical pulse is on the drums, Trojano eventually transitioned to the guitar, drawn to its compatibility with his introspective songwriting. Blending his fingerstyle technique, the performer studied jazz and composition in college, writing a full book upon his first senior recital. Today, Trojano's layered lyrics, intricate guitar stryngs and hushed vocals continue to impress. The troubadour performs tunes from his 2010 release, *Two Lines*, and the forthcoming *Sunday's Son*.

ZAK TROJANO

Saturday, January 24, 7-9:30 p.m., at Greenway Music, 670 So. 802, 247-4753, zaktrojano.com



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JAN. 22 | THEATER

JAN. 22-25 | THEATER

Naughty and Nice

It's cold outside, but the Vermont Burlesque Festival is heating things up onstage. More than \$5 local, national and international performers combine comedy and appeal and over the top theatrics for a sure all to catch fever. One of a kind acts mix class and sass at venues in Barre and South Burlington, where top talents—including headliners Pink Lady Scarlett, James and Russell Bruner (pictured)—divide audiences. Offstage, classes with these diverse entertainers grant folks access to a wealth of knowledge. The best part of this steamy soiree? Partial proceeds benefit the Prostate Center of Vermont and the University of Vermont Cancer Center.

VERMONT BURLESQUE FESTIVAL

Thursday January 22, 7:30 p.m.
Friday January 23, 7 p.m.
Saturday January 24, 3 p.m.
6:15 and 8:45 p.m. Sunday
January 25, 10 p.m. at venues
in Barre and South Burlington
County locations. \$16-50
info: carlythelaw.com/vermontburlesquefestival.com

Tuned In

The name Charles Hinkle Holly may not ring a bell, but his stage persona Buddy Holly certainly will. Widely regarded as a rock-and-roll pioneer, the singer-songwriter changed the course of American music before dying in a plane crash at age 23 in 1959. Known for transcending racial barriers, the Texas-born performer brought his work as "Buddy Holly," "Peggy Lee" and "That'll Be the Day" to a widespread fan base. Those toe-tapping tunes are among the 34 that power *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. Tapal, parties, rock concerts and more, the production pays tribute to the house of rockers-day music.

BUDDY:

THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY

Thursday January 22, 7:30 p.m. at
Pavement Theatre in Hudson. \$16-50
64-52 1146, 779-0800, pavementtheatre.org



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health & fitness

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GETTING RACE IN THE SUE: RACE AFTER KIDS: Moms and dads are encouraged to bring their own pet for a petting zoo. **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

JAZZED UP LIFE: Adults ages 18 and up are invited to a social in a supportive environment. **Thurs 7:30-9:30 p.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

PICTURAL COR: Roll in an antique car or a classic car. **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

PICTURAL COR: Roll in an antique car or a classic car. **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

holidays

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION: DAYTIME VIDEO TO THE PINK LIVES LIVES: **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION: LITRATURE, CAUSE, PLACE MATTERS: **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

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kids

LEGO CLUB: **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

LITRATURE, CAUSE, PLACE MATTERS: **Sat 10:30-11:30 a.m.** \$10. **10000 10th St. Suite 100. Info: 353-5643**

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After their successful debut "The Play" and "The Hill" story, the top troupe of actors return to the top of the hill with a new production of "The Play" and "The Hill" story.

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OF MICE AND MEN - James Franco and Chris O'Donnell present the classic of American literature.

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE PLAYERS' HILL STORY - After their successful debut "The Play" and "The Hill" story, the top troupe of actors return to the top of the hill with a new production of "The Play" and "The Hill" story.

THEATRE

PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS



calendar

SAT 24 SEP 2010

outdoors

ROCKY MOUNTAIN UNDERGROUND AND COHEE
The Colorado National Monument presents a remarkable display of natural rock art in the Valley of the Rocks. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

SLUSH RUSH Saturday, Harris Bretz takes over the Colorado Open 10K. Run on every trail near Crested Butte. Race starts with 500 to 1,000. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

SURF RIDGE TRAIL Hike A moderate winter hike to Mount Mansfield. Hike on every trail in the area. Hike starts with 500 to 1,000. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

entertainment

DIGITAL VIDEO EDITING First Day Film offers a hands-on digital video editing course. The course is designed for those who want to learn the basics of video editing. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

EAST ASIAN SEMINAR SERIES FOR TEACHERS Educators explore their knowledge of contemporary Asian literature and the role of the artist in Japanese literature. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

HUNT TO DISCOVER Teachers explore the Hunt to Discover program. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

PAID FOR BY (Open House) Teachers explore the Paid for by program. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

arts

WATERLOO GARDEN The Waterloo Garden is a beautiful garden in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

SHRUBS AND TREES The Shrubs and Trees exhibit is a beautiful exhibit in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

books

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING The New York Times Bestselling book is a beautiful book in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

children

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING The New York Times Bestselling book is a beautiful book in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE The National Theatre Live is a beautiful theatre in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

THEATRE REPORT The Theatre Report is a beautiful report in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

science

JOHN ALSTON TALK The John Alston talk is a beautiful talk in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

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SUN.25

agriculture

LUNCH & LEARN Lunch & Learn is a beautiful lunch in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

arts

JOHN ALSTON TALK The John Alston talk is a beautiful talk in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

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food & drink

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health & fitness

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hills

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language

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VERMONT YOUTH ORCHESTRA WINTER CONCERT The Vermont Youth Orchestra presents a beautiful concert in the heart of the city. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Info: 970-520-5856

entertainment

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Odd, Odd World

The Bernard Lakerz' Jake Lasek on his band's new record, stoner metal and Prince

BY ETHAN BE SEIFE

Swirling, whirling and hypocritically lush, the music of the Bernard Lakerz has been historic in its use of every note in a series of sound and promises to meticulously smash them against the most knifable of rocks. Tronicle, per legend, the band's sound echoes those of "disorder" bands like My Bloody Valentine and Rilo Kiley, but distinguishes itself with rich textures and once a little levity.

Jake Lasek, who cofounded the Bernard Lakerz with his wife, Olga Gorris, in 2003, has no quibbles with the stoner-metal moniker, but he eagerly identifies several other, more unexpected influences on his band's sound. Lasek cites credits on Prince Rogers Nelson as vocal influence. (Doe hypnagogic, that'll be the artist currently known as Prince.)

The Bernard Lakerz bring their big, jocular sound to the purple guru of Winoski's Marley House on Tuesday, January 22, the last stop on a six-date mini-tour of the Northeast. After some difficult telephone negotiations with Bill Corbett, the venerable Lakerz managed to speak with Steven Gago from the band's home base of Montreal.

SEVEN DAYS: The Bernard Lakerz' sound is pretty expressive. How do you think it'll play in a small venue like the Marley House?

ANCE LAKERZ: Almost all musicians will say that it's fun to play small venues for the intimacy. Not all of them, but a lot of the time, we have our best shows in small venues. Since we do have such a big sound, the sound fills the whole room much more easily. You can kind of be overpowered.

SD: I know what you mean. I once saw the Blues Jewettown Massacre play in some kids basement. JL: Everybody's got a story like that. I grew up in the western part of Canada in a city called Regina [in Saskatchewan]. We never really had any bands come out there except for hardcore bands and pop-punk bands from California, every once in awhile. So my story is that, when I was 15, I saw Green Day in a shitty little club in Regina. That's my staged claim to small-show fame. My wife says Nervosa is a small club during the Black two,

and Sonic Youth, My Bloody Valentine, all these classic shows. I'm like, "I saw Green Day!"

SD: When I lived in Minneapolis, a few of my friends would sometimes go to the legendary "after-concerts" at Prince's Paisley Park Studios. I never had the pleasure.

JL: He's doing them again? Apparently, if you subscribe to Prince's Twitter feed, every now and then he'll say "There's a show tonight. Come to Paisley Park." It's a concert, first-serve and come late, seven bucks. And Prince will just walk through the crowd. I'm very jealous of the people of Minneapolis.

SD: From your music, listeners might not expect you to admire Prince so much. Might he be a kind of hidden influence?

JL: I think about this sometimes. When I was young, I would hang along to Prince records all the time. And I almost feel that I was missing my voice to sing high like him. When I started writing songs and singing, I never wanted to sound like me to sing in falsetto, because he did it. And the does it, it's fucking totally cool. But then, being from Regina, all these guys thought it was ridiculous that I would sing like that. But when I got to Montreal and started hanging in, as what I was doing, you know what? I realized I was actually comfortable singing that way. So I'm gonna credit him indirectly — or maybe even directly — for that.

SD: I hear traces of stoner metal in your stuff too. JL: That I love Shogun and I really love OM, which is the oldest band started by Shogun's bass player. As much as I'm a Prince fan, I'm also a metal fan. Shogun is one of my all-time favorites bands, and I love Iron Maiden and obviously Black Sabbath. And all that doom stuff, like Sunn O))), when metal decided it could be psychedelic, that really lit a fire for me.

The band opening for us, USA Out of Vietnam, is a doom-type band. Very slow songs that are really really long. Sort of like the caffeine does.

SD: I've been listening to your most recent album, *Urbain Excess*. Incomparable UFO, and it sounds loose and dreamy but also exceptionally coherent.

JL: That album was our first conscious effort to take more care in recording. A lot of the time, we were haphazard in the way we doing things. Because I own the studio, I can actually be in here trying to get good sounds for weeks on end. So we kind of made a rule. Once we got a sound, who cares? Because I want to hear it in a song more than anything else. But UFO was more thought out. When we found a good sound, we'd at least spend five

minutes to see if we could make it better. We'd never really worked that way before, so, in that sense, it's a dream, more carefully textured album.

SD: What can you tell me about the next record?

JL: It's real! Bernard is never super-care, but this one is

definitely not as carefully recorded as UFO was. We did a lot of writing outside of the studio, and we're finding that a lot of the tracks we had recorded really odd — and I could even say "really poorly" — are turning out to be better than we were keeping them and integrating them into the album.

SD: You guys do take your time between records.

JL: This time, there's been a shorter turnaround time making the album, but as far as the release is concerned, we're still looking at three years per album. Lakerz takes a while to build albums up. Once it gets delivered — we're hanging around March — we're still gonna be sitting at it one month turnaround, at least, before it comes out. My plan was always to make records more quickly, but I also don't ever want to compromise what we're doing. So if we're not liking it, we're not gonna do it. It's an odd world, this world of musicians. ☺

**WHEN METAL DECIDED
IT COULD BE PSYCHEDELIC,
THAT REALLY LIT A FIRE FOR ME.**
JAKE LASEK, THE BERNARD LAKERZ

INFO

The Bernard Lakerz in the USA: Out of Vietnam, Tuesday, January 22, 5 p.m., at the Marley House in Winoski. \$10 to 18. marleyhouseconcert.com

soundbites

BY DAN BOLLES



Tony Stone Worldwide

Not Dead Yet

There was big, big news for jam fans, local and beyond, last week. If you missed it, congrats on waking up from the coma you must have been in until just now.

Anyhoo, the four surviving members of the **BEYOND** — also the **GRATE** — announced that they will reunite for what will very likely be the band's final performance ever: The show, an ecstatic dubbed "Rise 'Till We Fall" after a line in the Dead classic "Breakdown Palace," will take place at Soldier Field in Chicago from July 3 to 5. These came about 20 years to the day after the Dead's final performance with guitarist **JERRY GARCIA** on July 9, 1995, also at Soldier Field. Garcia died exactly one month later, on August 9, 1995.

By itself, a final Dead reunion is monumental news, even historic. What

adds the announcement even greater is how the band plans to deal with the absence of its most iconic member.

Two words: **Hologram Jerry**. OK, fine. I'm kidding. (And props to our old pal sax "the Club Goddard" **WARRIOR** for beating me to that joke on Facebook last week. Great gingers think alike.) The real solution, and the local hook, is that same sax — and fellow ginger — **THEY** **WARRIOR** will stand in for Captain Trips. (That sound you're hearing is the collective "oooooooooooooooooooo" coming from the giddy local jam community.)

This might surprise longtime readers familiar with my dislike for saxophone, but I think this is patently fucking amazing.

live culture
PERFORMING ARTS NEWS • VIEWS

Phish fans, in particular, have long berated the Dead and Phish being lumped together under one or dyed umbrella. And they have a point: The two bands share little in common, musically, aside from a predilection for heavy improvisation. Those who denigrate these as two sides of the same musical coin (ugh) display a willful ignorance toward both bands. (I confess I've probably been guilty of that transgression at certain points-over the years.)

Of course, what ostensibly links the two bands is the cultural phenomenon both became. For many, following either band transcended mere fandom and became a lifestyle choice. That's a sociological condition Phish inherited from the Dead. You could argue Phish wouldn't be Phish without the cultural framework the Dead and their fans created. To write Trey to close the final chapter of the Dead's career is to acknowledge that of that shared lineage and, in some ways, a belated passing of the torch. And that's pretty cool.

It's also worth noting that there is really no obvious heir apparent to Phish. Granted, even after 30-plus years, the band shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon. But someday they, too, will play their final phrase. Well, they'll play their final phrase. Well, they'll play the jam-band music as when is anyone going. It's possible, or even likely, that no one does, which places even more historical importance on the Dead's Trey today.

Also interesting (albeit maybe only to me): Keyboardist **WARRIOR**, who played with the Dead a bunch in the 1980s and '90s, will be on hand in Chicago — as will **WARRIOR**'s own owners, **BTW**. I mention that only because it's a chance to bring up one of my favorite random rockstar anecdotes.

Harnaby is tight with Windham Hill Records founder and reclusive New Age-saxophone player **WARRIOR**, whom I wrote about last year. The two used to play pickup basketball together and, apparently, Harnaby is a capital B Baller.

"You always wanted him on your team in pickup games?" Ackerman

SOUNDGATES • PHIL

For up to the minute news about the local music scene, follow @dotculture on Twitter or read the Live Culture blog www.dotculture.com/liveculture.

HIGHER GROUND

www.highergroundmusic.com

LOTS — THE BOLD MUSIC

JANUARY

WITH THE JATWOMES
JOHN BROWN'S BODY
BIG MEAN SOUND MACHINE

WILD CHILD
PEARL AND THE BEARD

VERMONT
BURLESQUE FESTIVAL
EARLY AND LATE SHOWS

FRONTIER
RUCKUS
THE NOVEL IDEAS, RED TIE BOX

JOHN BROWN
DATSIK
TROLLIE'S N. JIM, KENNEDY
JONES, BARLEY LIVE

THE MACHINE
PERFORMS PINK FLOYD

CABINET
IRON EYES LUCY

GLWX FEAT.
ALEX YOUNG
ALDO, CORPUS VILLE, HOBBS,
JAMES

FEBRUARY

THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY
ANI DIFRANCO
ANNA MITCHELL

PAPER DIAMOND
ANTISERUM, LINDSAY LOMEND

UPPERMILL — JUST ANNOUNCED
JAMES BROWN
JAMES BROWN
JAMES BROWN
JAMES BROWN
JAMES BROWN

THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY
THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY
THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY
THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY
THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY

PHOTO: TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

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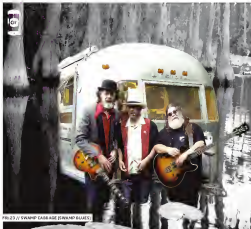


PHOTO BY SWAMP CABBAGE (ERIN AND BLAKE)

Born on the Bayou led by Walker Parks, lead guitarist for the late, great Richie Herring, SWAMP CABBAGE are an essential musical iconography. Aptly describing themselves as "Delta blues and trailer park funk," the trio creates heavy, masculine refuge that recalls classic southern rock. But it is underscored by an intellectual consciousness more common to jazz and classical, and coupled with a very bluesy, often lachrymose lyrical sensibility. Catch them at Worcester's Burlington this Friday, January 21, with local rootsies twostringe.

WED.21

washington

MALCOLM SPENCER
Moose's Warehouse (7:30)
\$10-15 • 503.966.1111

J-P-PUB Pub Crawl with Hosts 7 p.m. free. Karaoke with Hosts 10:30 p.m. free.

JUNKIE Patience Johnson
Project Space 5 p.m. free.

LEGION'S BROTHER & CARRIE Mike
Madden (jazz) 7 p.m. free.

HAMILTONIAN PIZZA Brian
Spicer (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

HEATERS 5 VV Comedy Club
Presenting What a Jaded Comedy
Open (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

REBEL 8888 Home Reborn
Sundance (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

REBEL 8888 Home Reborn
Sundance (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

REBEL 8888 Home Reborn
Sundance (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

REBEL 8888 Home Reborn
Sundance (theater) 8 p.m. \$10-15.

RED SQUARE DJ Jack Kowalski
(theater) 11 p.m. free.

THE TIGHT PACK
(theater) 8 p.m. free.

THE TIGHT PACK
(theater) 8 p.m. free.

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PHOTO BY SWAMP CABBAGE (ERIN AND BLAKE)

TUESDAY

BRIMCO'S MOUNTAIN
TAVERN DJ Bunkin
 at 10:30 p.m. (openers)
 (10 p.m. to 12 a.m.)

GUEST HALL (dinner and the
 track) 8 p.m. (10 p.m. to 10 p.m.)
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

waterbury area
DI HALL AT THE BUNGALOW
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

CTV LIVES (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

THE BROTHERS TAVEN
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

LEWIS & KIRBY (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

THE BROTHERS TAVEN
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

outland area
PHILIP HARRIS (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)
 (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)

champlain islands/northwest
THE BROTHERS TAVEN
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SAT.24 (1) THE WONDERS (HARD ROCK)

Brothers From Other Mothers Though their sound influences include the likes of the Avett Brothers, the Punch Brothers and the Mumfords, Glass Falls, NY, duo the **WONDERS** aren't related. For proof, witness their recently released debut record, *We're Not Brothers*. Though they don't share DNA, they do share some commonalities with those aforementioned family acts: most notably sticky pop hooks couched in a dusty Americana aesthetic. Also, brands. They're at the Skynyrd Presents in Burlington on Saturday, January 24.

CLUB THE BUNGALOW (10 p.m. to 11 p.m.)
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REVIEW *this*

Keiti Botula, *Wider Net*

(SELF-RELEASED CD DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)



Vermont native Keiti Botula has moved to New York City to pursue more kinetic music grounds, but her work still has the whimsical and slightly soundshape of the Green Mountain State. Her debut net EP, *Wider Net*, introduces a capable artist intent on doing things her way. Botula wrote, recorded, produced and mixed the EP herself, singing and playing all of the instruments — except for a snippet of his last symbol.



Josh Brooks, *Tall Tales*

(SELF-RELEASED CD DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

It takes a lot of practice to make something simple seem amazing. Vermont's Vegetarian singer, songwriter and journeyman collaborator Josh Brooks has delivered precisely that with his sixth solo effort, *Tall Tales*. The record is composed entirely of single takes over a single microphone, crafted at an unadorned location that Brooks refers to as Edge of the Red Studios (it's the kind of stark-naked approach that Alan Lomax pioneered and T Bone Burnett still approves of). The results are a million miles from "mountain music" or American pastiche, though.

Brooks is a polished diamond of a songwriter with a language all his own. The writing and performance are

Botula's recognizable sound fits comfortably in the female singer-songwriter genre. The twangy acoustic opener "Riptide" reveals instrumental influences of female folk duo First Aid Kit, while the anxious, tambourine-driven "Tug of War" recalls Victoria Berganos (Taken by Trees). Botula's sound is not entirely derivative, but it certainly owes much to the likes of Cat Power, Patti and Ingrid Michelson.

Botula especially follows in Patti's high-pitched nasal footsteps on the buoyant "Comely." This slightly sexy track is all romance, with lines such as "You bleed straight through my soul / I sleep under the paper of a snow cone" and "Your wags in your speech / Warm words I can almost taste for weeks / I need a fix / I'm in rough shape." So keep this one in mind for your Valentine's Day plans. "Sweet of" is a luscious, syrupy number with wistful vocals and brooding lyrics such as "Baby, you motivate me slip by slip / Sleep with an elaborate of stories / I broke how much I enjoy it." The next song, "Stagger Flowers" is largely forgettable. Its chipper tune and simple

guitar strumming doesn't distinguish Botula from the generic, sugary-sweet sound that defines much radio-friendly indie-pop.

The closing title track, "Wider Net," wraps things up with a pang of melancholy. Botula sings of love unrequited, or at least unfulfilled: "Once you cast a wider net / You call yourself a fisherman / You walk the decks afraid to wet your feet," she sings. Then, "Once you cast a wider net / And lifted me from my loneliness / You could make a living fishing for women in this sea / But I wish this fish could be all that you need." It's a beautiful and relatable tale that ties the EP's themes together.

While the displays suggest whimsy to please the singer-songwriter crowd, Keiti Botula likely needs more edge to connect this indie-pop persona to the top tier of 2011. *Wider Net* is a welcome introduction from a talented new artist.

Keiti Botula's *Wider Net* is available for download at ellipsy.com and on iTunes.

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sheepskin contrasts on the album are the hauntingly understated "Queen for a Day," delivered in a husky whisper that resonates like a church organ, and the straightforward folk of "Handsome Boy." On the latter, Brooks belts out some startlingly good double hooks and struts a cutie by foot-stomper. These two cuts alone don't reveal his day's from more promise, yet they both fit nicely into the same old of them.

With *Tall Tales*, Josh Brooks is expanding an already impressive, and diverse, catalog of albums and solo projects while exploring. The recording's carefully honed stories command attention and reward close listening. Embellished, as he put it, as "a father, teacher and songwriter" this compulsively creative and prolific musician is evolving into something of a state treasure. Fortunately, we are assured that a second installment "shouldn't be too far behind."

Josh Brooks will celebrate the release of *Tall Tales* with a performance at the Binky Memorial Library in Vergennes on Sunday, January 24. *Tall Tales* is available at joshbrooks.bandcamp.com.

JAMIE HOLLAND

Clarie Smither
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3/10/12 10:00 AM

Hooked on Fiber

"Fibrations!" the Great Hall, Springfield

For those New England Fiber Art and Mixed-Media Invitational Exhibitors, the Great Hall in Springfield. For this show — the fifth since its inception in 2012 — the venue extends its reach to artists from across New England. The diverse show puts talented Vermont artists head-to-head (and hobnob-to-humble) with some stiff competition, and they meet it handily. Great Hall co-ordinator Nina Jansson, Susan Demore Balch and Lynn Barrett selected the artists to curate.

For centuries, fiber arts were the province of housewives who used them to create utilitarian objects, often with exceptional craftsmanship. The painstaking, labor-intensive endeavors were considered "women's work" and thus dismissed as art form.

Post-World War II, artists coined the phrase "fiber arts," and the 1960s and '70s ushered in a revolution for the medium. Artists expanded fiber weaving to coiling, knotting, lacing, plaiting and myriad other techniques. They explored the qualities of new materials and tested them as nonrepresentational forms, as well as figurative, representational and fantasy forms in two and three dimensions.

The women's movement embraced fiber arts, honoring their connection with textiles from the Middle Ages through the Industrial Revolution. Contemporary artists have further reinvigorated the medium. That women still rank among the most prominent fiber artists is reflected in "Fibrations" — all those represented here are female.

Viewers of this exhibit will find some of the most exceptional pieces clustered together. Two dominate an end wall, "Tall Trees" (2006) by 89½ inches, recycled, hand-dyed wool hand knotted on looms) by Tali Alpert Fay of Sandy Hook, Conn., consists of four flat, abstract verticals. Despite bearing only a fleeting resemblance to trees, Fay's constructions leave no doubt about what they represent. Her artist statement says, "Just like people, some trees stand out in a crowd more than others." She's got that right. Her crocheting work undulates in rich colors as the wall.



TALL TREES: Fiber Artwork by Tali Alpert Fay

SOME WORKS HERE TELL STORIES OR OTHERWISE EXPRESS THE HUMAN CONDITION.



EYE GAZER: by Susan Demore Balch

Nearly, as if it were a woody companion, stands Susan Perreca's "Centropappa III" (She wove fresh cut oak, maple and birch saplings together to create a 5-by-5-by-8 foot twig structure. "Circular hats, large enough for two, provide a quiet spot for a little 4-1/2

or become lively play spaces," the Maine artist writes in her statement.

Perreca's inventiveness with materials emanates from "Book Jacket" (14 by 60 by 3 inches, recycled, cat books). The piece is hung high enough to look like a giant Mafra clinging to the wall, but

viewers can see that children's board books were cut and stitched together to create this uniquely wearable work.

On an adjacent wall, quilter Susan Demore Balch of Reading beautifully deploys modern techniques to interpret a traditional design from an antique Nantux rug. Her aptly titled "Eye Gazer" is a

REVIEW

112 by 84-inch wall hanging, machine sewed and quilted with variegated cotton thread. This, along with Balch's crocheted wall hangings, is mesmerizing.

Some works have tell stories or otherwise express the human condition, such as Channing Prior's 64-by-60-inch wall hanging "Miranda: The Tempest." A scene from Shakespeare is the subject of her adaptation of JW Waterhouse's painting "Miranda — The Tempest." Prior used machine and hand applique, machine embroidery, layered rials, and fabric paint to achieve her amazing effects in her statement. Prior says she admires the English neo-Raphaelite painters. She evokes that devotion by stitching her work with needles, making numerous fabric folds in Miranda's dress and stretching each strand of fiber to emphasize the direction of strong winds. Waterhouse and the Bard himself so adroitly have been impressed.

Using photo transfers, New Hampshire artist Tali Brown created "Naked Flood Mashed, Grashed, Baked and Bumbled," a 53 1/2-by-32-inch hanging quilt. Her powerful, photographic images report the story of the catastrophic 2006 flooding that took lives and devastated her town. Repeating images of a congested culvert create a design that also shows how raging floodwaters destroyed it.

Wes Redmond, also from New Hampshire, evokes personal memory by using photography, collage and surface design to create digital fiber collages. "Three Sons, Forest Homebound" (24 by 25 inches) and "Coming Back" (26 by 26 inches) incorporate images of her favorite trees and flowering hills of text. The blended techniques and layers of fabric create a muted sensuousness.

Burlington artist Marilyn Gillo says she makes art as a visual record of her

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 800-967-7070

INNOVATION CENTER GROUP SHOW: Works by Audrey Soref, James Wagner, Jim & Tamara Kothmann, James, Longina Sorensen, Sam & Lisa Robert Green, and Scott Nelson on the first floor; Jean Chesney, Jeanne Amato, Laurel Waters, Lynn Lee, Marshall, and Michael P. Lee and Tom Morley on the second floor. INNOVATION HUB: 1500 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

JOY MAGALLA: "Morning Glory, No. 1000," "Secret Place," an exhibit of new landscape paintings. JOY MAGALLA: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

JAMES WAGNER & LAUREL WATERS: Abstract paintings by James Wagner and Laurel Waters. JAMES WAGNER & LAUREL WATERS: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

LEAH KAMBE: Paintings inspired by the natural world. Leah Kambe: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

LISA KATZ: "The Garden," a painting by Lisa Katz. LISA KATZ: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

LYNN LEE HOBBS: "The Garden," a painting by Lynn Lee Hobbs. LYNN LEE HOBBS: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

LYNN LEE HOBBS: "The Garden," a painting by Lynn Lee Hobbs. LYNN LEE HOBBS: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

MAUREEN GROUP SHOW: Art by Maureen Group. MAUREEN GROUP: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

MARIA HEDER: "The Garden," a painting by Maria Heder. MARIA HEDER: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.

MARION HOBBS: "The Garden," a painting by Marion Hobbs. MARION HOBBS: 1000 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401. Through February 28. Info: 802-855-3000. The Innovation Center of Vermont Innovation.



Marieleise Hutchinson A self-taught painter who lives in Maine and Massachusetts, Marieleise Hutchinson paints realistic depictions of the region's rural landscapes. In the decades since she first picked up a brush in her twenties, Hutchinson has developed a strong following in the region. "The distinct seasons of New England, as well as its character, present an endless source of inspiration," notes the galleries at Green Mountain Fine Art Gallery in Stowe, which exhibits Hutchinson's paintings this winter. "A deep respect and sensitivity for the commonplace is evident as she records the passage of time at vanishing homesteads, fields and farmsteads of rural America." Through March 31. Tickets: "Duckbridge," a 12-by-16-inch oil.

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MOVIE PLAYING IN PT

THE WEDDING BENCHWARMER (R) Jay-Good Movies, Inc. Is it any wonder I can't take the local crowd out of my warm seat? In this comedy from first-time filmmaker Jay-Good (aka Jay-Good), a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

WILDER (R) The Wilder Group, Inc. In a young man's quest to become a 1000 mile soloist, he meets the daughter of a local couple in this adaptation of Cheryl Strayed's memoir. With Laura Dern and Seth Rogen, John Malkovich (Dustin, Susan, etc.) is invited. (24 min, 3 reviews, 4.5/5)

NEW ON VIDEO

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS (R) The DVD is on the shelves daily from the DVD store. Audio means you get more after — and learn for free! — and the DVD is on the shelves daily. (24 min, 3 reviews, 4.5/5)

THE RECTOR (R) The Rectory Group, Inc. In this comedy, a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

CONFESSIONS OF A FRODO BAGGINS (R) The Rectory Group, Inc. In this comedy, a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

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January 21, 2015
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MOVIES YOU MISSED

BY MARJORIE HARRISON

Did you miss: THE GUEST

Did you miss: THE GUEST. The film is on the shelves daily from the DVD store. Audio means you get more after — and learn for free! — and the DVD is on the shelves daily. (24 min, 3 reviews, 4.5/5)



What's the story? In this comedy, a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

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WHAT I'M WATCHING

BY ETHAN DE SEIZE

This week I'm watching: DARK WATERS

A great film to watch on the shelves daily from the DVD store. Audio means you get more after — and learn for free! — and the DVD is on the shelves daily. (24 min, 3 reviews, 4.5/5)



What's the story? In this comedy, a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

What's the story? In this comedy, a local crowd of 100+ people is invited to watch the wedding of a local couple.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:



JANUARY 14, 2015
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JANUARY 1, 2015
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DECEMBER 28, 2014
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Curses, Follies Again

Police charged Kahlil Aileen Buggs, 32, with fraudulent use of debit cards after Tamara Thomas noticed a family "shopping like it was Christmas" at a Family Dollar store in DeKalb, Ga. Thomas got behind them at the register and saw Buggs pay with her running card, which she recognized because it had been customized with a picture of her, her daughter and their puppy. When she confronted Buggs, he abandoned his \$200 purchase and told his family to start running. Thomas followed, leading police to their location. Besides Thomas' card, police found another missing debit card, which Buggs had used to buy \$40 in merchandise. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution)

Chesler Avant, 28, tried to enter a bakery in Greenwich, Fla., through the ceiling, but his plan was thwarted when he fell through the ceiling tiles and landed on top of a rack of potato chips. Police and Avant were badly hurt and took him to the hospital before charging him with armed burglary. (Los Angeles WRMG-TV)

Flights of Fancy

The Defense Department announced that it successfully tested a 30-caliber bullet that changes direction in midair. Officials said the "first ever guided small-caliber bullet" will be especially

useful to military snipers in windy and dusty conditions and at night. (News and Stripes)

A company called Hyperloop has teamed up with graduate students at the University of California Los Angeles to develop a solar-powered "speed tube" that will let passengers in a hovering capsule inside a low-pressure tube make the trip from Los Angeles to San Francisco in 25 minutes for about \$38. The tube technology could be used to link other cities less than 300 miles apart. Hyperloop CEO Dirk Ahlborn said, joking, "It could be very easily put together. It's more about figuring out how to make it a good business." (Los Angeles's KTLA-TV)

Know-It-All Follies

During his trial for defending landlords, Toronto resident Nana Willis, 50, pleaded "the Fifth" only to have prosecutor Craig Power point out the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution doesn't apply in Canada. (Toronto Star)

Evidence cited against accused murderer Paramara Balakrishna, 25, often had hearing in Cook County, Ill., included his Facebook post: "It's only murder

if they find the body, otherwise, it's a missing person." (Chicago Tribune)

Fruits of Research

Researchers linked the decline of marriage in the United States to the rise of free internet pornography. One of the study's authors, Michael Malcom, a professor at Pennsylvania's University of the Sacred Heart, explained that the reason is tied to the relationship between marriage and sexual gratification. If pornography is seen as an alternative means to sexual gratification, Malcom said, then it could be undercutting the need for marriage to serve this function. (Washington Post)

Fast food might be making people stupid as well as fat, according to researchers at Ohio State University who compared fast-food consumption and test results among children in grades 5 through 8. "Our results show clear and consistent association between children's fast-food consumption in fifth grade and academic growth between fifth and eighth grade," the researchers reported. (Washington Post)

Slightest Provocation

Sherrif's deputies in Tull County, N.D., and Brian Cohnell, 46, threatened to kill his 3-year-old son if the boy didn't call 911 while the parents argued over a game of YouTube. The boy told deputies that his mother was beating up his father when the dad made the threat. (Tulsa's Forefront)

Overcome by Technology

A New Zealand couple spent nearly 13 hours trapped in their new keyless car in their garage. Brian and Melbourne Smith had left the car's instruction manual in their Alexandra home and the trespasser outside the car when they realized that without the transponder, they couldn't start the engine to unlock the power doors. They tried to attract attention by knocking the hours and then tried crawling a winch down with a car jack. Neighbors found them the next morning with only enough air left to survive, for less than an hour, emergency workers told Melbourne Smith, 45, who was hospitalized for three days. After their rescue, Brian Smith, 48, swore that the door could have been unlocked manually. "Once I found out how simple it was to unlock it, I kicked myself that I did not find the way out," he said. (New Zealand's Otago Daily Times)

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JEN SCHREINER



HARRY BLISS



BOB ACKERMAN/GETTY

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18 APRIL 2015

FRAN KRAUSE

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